

To Whom it may Concern

Please accept the following as my submission to the legislators and public servants considering this Bill.

I'm aware that there is nothing in my submission that is new, but I want to add my voice to the expression of discomfort and even alarm at some of the assumptions behind the Bill. **I agree** that there are some alarming points of view being expressed on social media. My own family was nearly torn apart by some members subscribing to the belief that COVID wasn't real, that vaccines were pernicious etc. Only through love and much prayer, am I still in touch with and meeting with those family members. I also despair of the Trump politics and his "truth" that the election was stolen. **I agree** that these are scary times.

However, I didn't vote for politicians to determine "the truth" for me. Politicians are ordinary men and women doing their best for their constituents. I used to be involved in politics and married to a (now deceased) politician. I know all too well the frailties we all succumb to.

Although I could have wished that my family member mentioned above hadn't filled his head with what I considered nonsense, that's far less dangerous than lawmakers deciding when views are 'harmful' and 'hateful'. The definitions around 'hate' seem nebulous.

When I disagree with someone about whether we can fully appropriate the opposite sex, I'm not being hateful. I'm simply stating what is biological truth, and used to be fully accepted as truth until only 10 years ago, or so. Now I'm considered hateful and harming people for saying it. I'm aware in writing this (if you're even still reading), that in saying these things your hackles are automatically rising and you're likely to throw me into the pile that reads "Christian fundamentalist nut" or some such. I understand that there are complexities around every issues and many shades of grey. I should be allowed to state such, or listen to or read such views.

I shouldn't have to agree with prevailing ideologies and political messaging (which can change from government to government) in order to be considered a good citizen. I shouldn't be spoon-fed only the information that the government wants me to hear.

I could write more, but you have lots to read.

Please consider this and understand the fear of ordinary citizens who just want to have the right to make up their own minds and scrap this bill - perhaps consider strengthening curriculums in schools to teach logical thinking, looking at arguments from both sides etc, rather than shutting down our free speech.

Thank you for your public service,

Ailsa Williams.

