

To whoever this may concern.

I would like to make this submission to express my opposition to the proposed "New ACMA powers to combat misinformation and disinformation."

It is my opinion that these proposed laws, regardless of their intent, will infringe on the freedom of speech that is a corner stone of a democratic system that we enjoy.

I understand and respect the problem of misinformation and disinformation in media but am mindful of the shortfalls of policing a dialogue like social media.

The arbitrator of fact and fiction can only ever be a subjective exercise and one I believe has a poor record of identifying truth in practice.

Furthermore, any powers given to government, through regulations, to shape the narrative on a media platform are powers to shape the opinions of the voting public to the government's own agenda.

This, no doubt, will be an erosion of the checks and balances of a democratic system of government.

I believe in debate and exchange of diverse ideas and opinions are the only way to advance and improve opinions and beliefs instead of holding to ideologies.

I believe controlling a negative is an affront to those able to exercise objectively and will do little to discourage those who can't.

It is my experience that those whose opinions have been restricted become isolated from criticism and debate and their ideology becomes emboldened as they feel vindicated by other shortcomings of the censorship.

Lastly I would like to make express concern at the undue burden of bureaucracy that will fall upon online platforms to comply with to operate in Australia.

I believe, given our small market, this will prove unworkable for some platforms and result in the loss of online resources available to Australians.

Thanks

Simon Carter

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