

I request that this submission be anonymous.

Dear Officer,

Your department has invited submissions on the Communications and Legislation Amendment (Combating Misinformation and Disinformation) Bill 2023.

It is expressly against my will that this bill's be introduced. In its current form, it would allow the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) the authority to decide what Australians can freely and openly discuss at present while, at the same time, allowing the government and mainstream media the freedom to do so.

I believe everyone should have the right to hold and express their opinions freely; to be able to seek, discuss and impart information and ideas of all kinds through open discussion.

This bill would allow the ACMA the power to decide what would constitute misinformation and disinformation which would apply to everyone except mainstream media and the government. The ACMA would end up with the right to judge what it considers relevant.

The bill would also require digital platforms to address misinformation and disinformation rather than the ACMA being responsible for directly regulating individual pieces of content. So who decides really as to what is misinformation or disinformation that will be forced upon the general public?

Are digital platforms, mainstream media and the government the only groups allowed to express an opinion as fact while the population of Australia is robbed of its opinions and expressions of thought? Who will decide what information is true, misleading or deceptive?

I would like to decide this for myself after seeking as much information and input as I can. Discussion and debate would sadly be lacking as people would curtail their freedom of speech out of fear of reprisal, without expressly knowing whether it was included in misinformation or disinformation.

Many times my truths or opinions are from my personal experiences formed over much research and discussion. Why should an employee of ACMA have the right to determine that my information is incorrect?

I desire that I can investigate all views in relation to my life and make my own decisions after intelligent consideration.

As a free citizen of Australia, I reserve the right to investigate information myself and to have unrestricted access to points of view from both sides, so I can decide for myself what I consider true and to pass on true information as I see fit.

It would be foolish to think that imposed bureaucratic censorship by a select few could always be accurate, proper and correct for me or the whole Australian nation.

I believe this bill would take away my freedom of opinion and expression as well as all Australian citizens. It would be better for the government to encourage critical thinking and informed decision making.

Thank you for considering this submission.

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area of the letter.

Please keep this submission anonymous.

Sent from my iPad