

I wish to register a strong protest against this proposed bill which seeks to combat "misinformation and disinformation", but is at best, a poorly considered piece of legislation, or at worst, a case of government overreach. It is a bad, bad proposal.

The results of such a bill will be the suppression of any ideas contrary to the government's desired narrative. Freedom of speech will be no more. It will be an Orwellian future for Australia, with minorities unable to speak, and the social media platforms afraid to give any time or place for any agendas other than that of the government.

Freedom of speech is a non-negotiable freedom. The slightest infringement upon free speech has dire consequences. Better to allow the most utter lies to be aired than suppress the slightest sliver of truth, because eventually, truth will triumph, as history has taught us. This triumph will not be made easier by governments or any other bodies stepping in with their fancied superior knowledge and exerting a paternalism that keeps the nation from maturing and growing into a great society.

The best way to combat misinformation and disinformation is to have robust debate in the public space, and I would rather trust the sense of the people of Australia than a government whose idea of "truth" is going to be coloured by partisan politics and subject to its internal machinations.

No, the "Combating Misinformation and Disinformation Bill" will only serve to create more and greater misinformation and disinformation. No safeguards will be foolproof enough to retain this most basic of freedoms, free speech!

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I am making this submission on my own conscience, not on behalf of any organisation. This is meant to be a submission, and I give permission for it to be published.