

Dear Government Representative,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed legislation that would give the Australian Communications and Media Authority new powers to monitor and restrict online content deemed to be "misinformation" or "disinformation."

While the spread of false information is certainly concerning, empowering any government body to police speech would be an unacceptable assault on the fundamental human right of free expression. The path to countering misinformation is not censorship, but rather engaging in open and free debate where bad ideas are defeated by good ideas.

Any erosion of freedom of speech, no matter how well-intentioned, sets a dangerous precedent. It is simply not the role of government to referee truth and censor the voices it deems less valid. That would be antithetical to the values of an open democratic society.

Instead, the solution must come through more speech, education, and empowering individuals to think critically. It is our duty as citizens to counter misinformation through transparent fact-checking and sharing reliable information. But this must be done voluntarily, not under the threat of government coercion.

While some limited restrictions on speech may be warranted in extreme cases of malicious disinformation, any legislation must be very narrowly tailored with the utmost care paid to protecting open discourse. This proposed law appears dangerously broad and ripe for abuse or politicized "mission creep."

I urge you to consider the fundamental importance of untrammelled freedom of expression, which has been a bedrock principle since Australia's founding. Empowering bureaucrats to police online content would be a grave mistake and betrayal of core democratic values.

There are far better ways to counter misinformation while respecting free speech. As your constituent, I ask you to reject any legislation that would endanger Australians' basic liberties. The answer must be more speech, not less.

My submission can be made public and may be published if desired..

Kind Regards,
Paul Farmer

