

Feedback on the Exposure draft of the Communications Legislation Amendment (Combatting Misinformation and Disinformation) Bill 2023

Based on the fact Australians have been actively using social media platforms to communicate for well over 15 years now, there appears to be no evidence to support the introduction of this Bill. The associated level of government intervention and regulation will have the potential to severely impact on Australian's basic inherent human rights to free speech and their ability to express their thoughts and opinions freely.

The Bill is an overt act of Government overreach. There is no basis for introducing such draconian legislation given the myriad of existing legislation available to the government to punish wrong doers who engage in incitement, terrorism, defamation, vandalism, fraud, racism, sexism and criminal activities.

I note the intent of the legislation is to prevent significant harm to our democracy and society, which is duplicitous given this exactly what the Bill itself will potentially invoke on Australian citizens when social media platforms respond with draconian censorship to avoid sizeable penalties.

As a concerned citizen I would advocate strongly this bill be withdrawn in accordance with Australia's commitment as a signatory to Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

'Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression: this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.'