

## **ACMA Have Your Say on Misinformation/Disinformation Bill**

I have never written a submission on any bill before Parliament before this is the first because I am extremely (actually can I say scared to live in a country that would even consider such a bill) my reasons are provided below:

I have four children and seven grandchildren and being [REDACTED] years old I am with this bill more worried than ever before in my life for my children and grandchildren. My main concerns are this:

### **First point**

When you look at history and some of the best advances that have been made for society it is because we had freedom of speech and debate as I understand from the exposure draft this freedom will now be decided by a select few who work for ACMA. Some will say it only affects social media but that is where as an advanced society we have opened a much wider door for sharing of ideas.

### **Second Point**

The exposure draft mentions misinformation and disinformation is based on a number of things one being harm and when you look at the definition of harm it is so wide it could include anything, this is really scary.

### **Third Point**

I think it is actually been shown that in the past when people have been censored for misinformation/disinformation (some call it fact checking) particularly during the recent pandemic that the misinformation/disinformation actually has been shown to be correct and true what really concerns me about this is that purely because some shut this information down as misinformation so many people suffered unnecessarily some even lost their lives and this bill is or seems to be proposing to expand this form of censorship and worse to a few individuals and what's worse with these things is no one is held accountable for instance the draft exposure indicates there is no appeal provisions.

### **Fourth Point**

During the pandemic often it was Government who were spreading misinformation and I don't just mean Australia but New Zealand and the UK to name but a few and yet under the exposure draft the Government is exempt from ACMA ever accusing it of misinformation or disinformation.

### **Fifth Point**

I note one of the other reasons defined as to what misinformation or disinformation is is the environment, given climate change and many environmental issues are still widely contested out in the public arena to allow a few in ACMA to decide this is also scary particularly if history ends up showing that ACMA got it so wrong and what's worse if they do get it wrong thousands of people, businesses, could suffer very badly and even there could be suicides/deaths as a result.

## Final Point

I think something as life changing and potentially damaging as this should have been made clearer at the recent election as it is a huge issue. It seems to me we are not learning from our mistakes ie the pandemic where this type of censorship occurred with disastrous results lets not go down that path again please I beg.