

## **Re: Submission on the exposure draft of the Communications Legislation Amendment (Combatting Misinformation and Disinformation) Bill 2023**

Let me start by saying the fact that any political party would introduce a bill like this that will in effect will create a “Ministry of Truth” to police language shows just how far down the slippery slope towards a totalitarian dystopia Australia has come over the last decade.

The Morrison Government’s complete over-reaction to the recent pandemic, cheered on enthusiastically by every Labor State Premier, was a perfect example of the disaster we can expect if people are denied the right to speak freely and truthfully about the issues that concern them.

For example, during the pandemic government actions significantly increased the suffering of millions of ordinary Australians. Mask mandates, vaccination mandates, lockdowns and many other policies that have proven to be ineffective and even dangerous in the past were implemented again with tragic results.

One particularly heinous instance was the decision to disallow any form of early Covid treatment using safe and effective drugs that were having incredible success in treating Covid patients in many other parts of the World.

This one policy mistake may have caused the unnecessary deaths of thousands. Many mildly ill people were left untreated until they became so sick they were placed on ventilators and given painkillers until they died. With proper early treatment, many of these people would have completely recovered.

While this public health disaster was taking place, countless experts, scientists, professors, doctors and other smart, concerned people shared unequivocal evidence that these policies were wrong, dangerous and in many cases deadly. However, they were mercilessly attacked, ridiculed, sacked, vilified, de-funded and cancelled for trying to warn about the negative consequences of the government’s policies.

It is only now that many of the people who were attacked for contradicting the preferred narrative have been proven to be correct on virtually every issue, and the governments’ actions were shown to be consistently wrong, unscientific, dangerous and in many cases deadly.

After such a miserable public policy failure, to contemplate giving any government the unfettered power to determine the “Truth” on any issue, when governments have proven to be so catastrophically wrong on so many issues, defies belief.

**This legislation must be withdrawn and never reintroduced in ANY form because it will suppress honest, accurate, factual speech. Such misguided policy will stop people raising legitimate issues where government decisions are obviously wrong-headed, dangerous, or illegal, and has the potential to permanently damage Australian society.**