

18/1/2024

To whom it may concern

I wish to make comment on the following bill that is under review and the current objects contained at the beginning of the draft Bill.

“A Bill for an Act to amend the law relating to communications, and for related purposes

Objects 15 The objects of this Part are to ensure that audiences throughout

16 Australia are able to access free-to-air television content in order to:

17 (a) support Australia’s representative democracy by informing

18 Australians of issues or events that are relevant to public

19 debate and democratic decision-making; and

20 (b) ensure that audiences throughout Australia are able to access

21 content that is of public significance at a local, regional or

22 national level; and

23 (c) contribute to meeting the communications needs of

24 Australia’s multicultural society, including ethnic, Aboriginal

25 and Torres Strait Islander communities.”

Comment

I am a very strong supporter of free to air TV so strongly support the objects of this bill. For this reason I also strongly advocate for free to air TV to be easily found on turning on my TV. My reasons for this are as follows

- a) There are many families in Australia who are living below the poverty line who cannot afford pay TV. They can barely cover even the basic costs of living such as rent, petrol, medicines, food and school costs. There must be a free option that is easily accessible to these families, and is easy to find for all those who value our free TV. I am very much a supporter of free TV for this reason. We must make sure that these people have rights to access TV programs, news, radio programs,

information etc for free especially if they are struggling to put food on the table and pay the rent etc

- b) It is equally important for Australians to have access to information about Australian key issues of importance such as referendums or political issues or public warnings or matters that will affect our daily lives. Pay TV is more about films and miniseries, etc that does not do this in a useful way if at all. It is important for there to be a balance on local, national and international news and current affairs on free TV.
- c) I also think it important to support Australian content and programs and do not want our TV programs to be taken over by overseas programs although I do watch good overseas programs on free TV. Keeping Australian content is important for employment of all the people involved in the communications, news and entertainment industries, including all the people who work behind these programs to make them a success.
- d) It is also very important that multicultural groups are able to access programs in their native language and news about their homeland where they are likely to have relatives still living. Thus, free programs on TV and radio by SBS are very important to be easily found, especially if these people do not have good English skills.
- e) Likewise, I support Aboriginal people being able to access program content that is meaningful to them and culturally relevant.
- f) I personally am able to find enough good programs on free TV to satisfy my needs. I would be very angry if I bought a new TV and struggled to find the Australian free TV channels every time I turned my TV on.

I am not a supporter of pay TV because so many people cannot afford it. For some time, I have also been concerned about how much pay TV has been growing and about who owns it. Keeping free TV as the head of listings of channels on Australian TV's wherever made is critically important. It is important the free Australian TV channels are easy to find. Personally I would like to be able to have the channels I support in one listing and to be able to move the many channels I am not interested in to another place

as I find the channel system is becoming very cluttered and time consuming when looking for something amongst the now numerous channels. This especially applies to channels that are about selling products which don't interest me at all. When asked to accept a new channel we should have a right to reject it. There should be more information available about what the new channels are before they are accepted and then a permanent rejection option available as well.

Yours Sincerely

Elizabeth Crisp

PS I am happy for my name to be published but not my address or phone number.