

Example 1

Dear Senators,

I am writing in respect of the proposed Combatting Misinformation and Disinformation Bill.

As an Australian citizen, I am totally opposed to all aspects of this Bill - and I believe that the whole proposal should be scrapped.

The effect of this Bill, if it were to pass into law, would be to give a government-controlled entity the right to determine what is true and what is not – to decide what constitutes misinformation or disinformation.

We only have to go back to the Covid years to see for ourselves that government figures and government departments were the entities that were responsible for the greatest distribution of (what later was proven to be) misinformation and disinformation. They were deliberate and repeat offenders – and to this day have never been held accountable for the lies that they disseminated.

Going forward, how could we possibly consider deliberately putting the henhouse under the control of the proven fox? For that is what this Bill proposes. Why should Australians trust the judgement of ACMA – a bureaucracy beholden to the government?

The Bill is essentially an On-Line Censorship Bill. If it passes, social media businesses will be under legal and financial pressure to ban -or shadow ban - any posts that deviate from the government narrative. This is an existential threat to free speech.

As someone who had (what I believed to be) an innocuous Facebook post rejected because it broke the Facebook Community Rules, I know firsthand how it is to be censored for holding a perfectly legitimate view.

People find the truth by hearing all sides of a debate and making up their own minds. They do not need a 'big brother' (with a vested interest) to tell them what is true and what is untrue thereby stifling discourse. Open debate and dissent are critical to a healthy, functioning democracy.

Going down the path of this proposed bill represents a major erosion of Australian democracy.

As I stated at the outset, I am totally opposed to all and every aspect of this proposed Combatting Misinformation and Disinformation Bill – for the reasons I have outlined.

Example 2

I am writing in respect of the proposed Combatting Misinformation and Disinformation Bill.

As an Australian living woman I am totally opposed to all aspects of this Bill - and I believe that the whole proposal should be scrapped.

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