

Example 1

Trust in our government depends upon absolute transparency.

Without transparency, the public cannot hold the government to account, expose corruption or the abuse of power. By reducing transparency, this Bill will, inevitably, reduce the trust of the Australian people in our government and our democratic institutions. The result is not a safer Australia. In threatening our democracy, this Bill threatens the peace, prosperity and freedom of all Australians.

This law would give the government power to suppress viewpoints that conflict with their favoured narratives. It is open to abuse, which would be difficult to detect, let alone correct. This is why censorship powers are the hallmark of authoritarian dictatorships, not democracies. Where the government should move to prevent a recurrence of such abuse, this Bill would regularise government overreach. The Bill grants substantial powers to ACMA to enforce regulations, approve industry codes, and demand information from platforms.

The ability of the government to access information about what private citizens think, and particularly to identify those harbouring “harmful” or dangerous opinions, is more powerful than any democratic government should seek.

This Bill must be abandoned before it undermines the very fabric of our democracy.

Example 2

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The power of Big Tech to influence information systems and, thus the opinions and behaviours at a population level, is well established. This Bill would regularise and

incentivise behaviours that have the potential to influence election outcomes and therefore the direction of Australia as a nation. No such powers should ever be outsourced to foreign-owned entities.

This Bill poses a grave threat to the principles of democracy and freedom of speech. I urge the Senate to abandon this Bill in the interest of protecting the rights and liberties of all Australians.