

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Assistance Bill Consultation](#)
Subject: The Assistance and Access Bill 2018
Date: Thursday, 6 September 2018 1:01:23 PM

As a member of the public i would like to voice my objection to the Assistance and Access Bill 2018.

I would like to note, that i think that it is good that the state is concerned with the safety and security of its citizens, and i can see how encryption could pose a large obstacle to this.

Having said that, the potential power of this bill is very wide reaching. Ideally, this power would only be used in genuine cases where safety and security were threatened, however there is no guarantee of this. Crucially, if this power were to be abused, it would allow the state to violate the privacy of EVERY citizen, because of how connected and digitally focused the world has become.

This represents an unacceptable outcome, as a certain degree of individual privacy is a requirement of a free and functioning democracy. So, if a government were to take a step away from democracy, this power represents a quick and easy way to slide into a full on dictatorship.

The government should always be looking to improve the systems that govern the country and daily life, and improved security is a way to improve the system. But so is improving privacy. Since these two improvements are in direct contradiction to each other it is important to balance them. Recently the recent trend in many governments seems to be to improve security at any cost, which doesn't improve the system as whole because it erodes the rights, freedoms and privacy of citizens.

It should be noted that this security frenzy comes at a time when the world has become much safer. There are fewer wars than ever before, and where they do exist they limited exclusively to civil wars (sometimes with foreign backing) that are smaller in scale and contained to a smaller area or country. There is much less poverty than before, medicine and science have made amazing strides and people are increasingly living in a global world where it matters what happens to people on the other side of the world because things like trade, immigration, etc impact the jobs, lifestyle and experiences of normal everyday people. Relatively speaking the media coverage of this is extremely disproportional (scary, dramatic stories sell). Because of this, i cant help but feel that the government is either taking advantage of this panic to obtain more power or indulging the whims of a poorly informed populace for more votes. Neither of which is desirable.

I hope that my concerns will be taken into consideration.
Thank you