

Politics podcast: Mark Dreyfus on changing the government's foreign interference bill

Written by Michelle Grattan, Professorial Fellow, University of Canberra

Introduced in the final hours of parliament sitting last year, the government's foreign interference legislation has been criticised for being draconian and too broad.

Shadow Attorney-General Mark Dreyfus says Labor acknowledges the need to do more about espionage activity and foreign influence in Australia but argues changes need to be made to the "hastily" and broadly drafted bill.

On the security legislation, he says that despite a narrow defence, journalists risk being sent to jail for handling classified information. He also expresses concern about the bill prohibiting foreign-based charities from doing advocacy work.

Dreyfus says the foreign register is "much needed" and the foreign donations ban is a step in the right direction – but the threshold for disclosing political donations needs to be drastically lowered.

Michelle Grattan does not work for, consult, own shares in or receive funding from any company or organisation that would benefit from this article, and has disclosed no relevant affiliations beyond their academic appointment.

Authors: Michelle Grattan, Professorial Fellow, University of Canberra

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