

# Understanding Foreign Interference (Countermeasures) Act (FICA)

FICA deals with attempts by foreign actors to manipulate our domestic politics and disrupt social cohesion. Our politics are for Singaporeans to decide and foreigners should not be allowed to interfere.

Let's clear up some misunderstanding about the Bill.

## Will FICA restrict Singaporeans from discussing politics?

- Singaporeans have the right to express their own views about politics. FICA does not prohibit this.



## Does this mean foreigners and foreign publications cannot write about Singapore's affairs?

- Foreign individuals or publications can report or comment on Singapore politics in an open, and transparent manner.



## Why is FICA tabled in Parliament within a short time, with no public discussion?

- Foreign interference has been discussed extensively in recent years, during the Select Committee on Deliberate Online Falsehoods, in Parliament, and in the media. There were also consultations with major internet companies and platforms.



## Why is FICA worded broadly?

- There are clear conditions to be met, before FICA can be used. FICA must be able to deal effectively with an evolving and wide range of foreign interference tactics.



## Why is there a need for FICA when there is Protection from Online Falsehoods and Manipulation Act (POFMA)?

- Foreign interference may go beyond using fake news, such as using local proxies and bots.



## Does FICA grant excessive powers to the Minister for Home Affairs?

- There are clear conditions to be met, before FICA can be used - e.g. the Minister can only issue a direction to stop hostile information campaigns if he thinks there is foreign involvement, and it is in the public interest to do so.



## Are there checks and balances against FICA?

- Appeals can be made. There will be an independent tribunal headed by a Supreme Court judge to hear appeals against HIC directions. Appeals on designations of "Politically Significant Persons" can also be made to the Minister.



## Why is there no judicial review?

- FICA decisions could involve sensitive information. A court hearing could undermine national interests and security, and bilateral relations.

