

## National Cultural Policy Submission

1469879

Public and anonymous

Individual



Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

Dear Minister Burke,

I am writing as a passionate supporter of independent bookshops, to urge the government to include meaningful support for bookshops in the new National Cultural Policy.

My local bookshop, Farrells, support the local community in the Mornington Peninsula and Mary Martin Bookstore which I use when I am in the city supports those in Melbourne CBD.

Local bookshops are not merely retail businesses. They are cultural infrastructure - community gathering places where Australian stories are discovered, where children fall in love with reading, and where literary careers begin.

Yet every year bookshops close, undermined by online giants and discount department stores.

I was first introduced to Farrells by my mother who, as a retired librarian, was a passionate book lover. This was the place she bought all our Christmas and Birthday gifts and now I have followed her lead. There are very few independent book shops on the Mornington Peninsula and if Farrells was forced to close we would lose a cherished contributor to the education and delight of future generations. When in town I visit Mary Martin bookstores (and have done for years). I have lately been attending book events supporting Australian authors which are an excellent way to widen my reading interests.

My Independent booksellers have exceptionally knowledgeable staff compared to the book counters at chain and department stores and their knowledge would be lost if forced to close.

Australia lags behind comparable countries in protecting its book retail sector. France, Italy, the UK, Germany, and more have introduced proven measures that have stabilised their independent bookshop sectors. Australia should do the same.

I support the Australian Booksellers Association's call to recognise local bookshops as cultural infrastructure. Local bookshops are irreplaceable - but without support, more will close. As a reader and community member, I ask you to stand up for these vital spaces before they are gone