

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, [REDACTED], supports the local community of [REDACTED]

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.

Local bookshops have been staples of my life since I was young. It's been through many amazing booksellers that I've been able to find books that have fundamentally bettered my time on this planet. Without them I'd lose a sense of community that's been fostered through becoming a regular, getting to know the staff, and joining one of their many bookclubs, which have introduced me to more people who have benefitted from bookshops.

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.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]