



Hi. My name is Charley Rejsek. I'm the CEO of BookPeople, Texas' largest independent bookstore. BookPeople first opened its doors to the public in 1970 as Grok Books in South Austin. Over the past 52 years, it changed its name to BookPeople, and has grown into a four bookstore in downtown Austin. I have been a bookseller for over 25 years, starting at the age of 18 at a Houston bookstore.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. I have some serious concerns about the vendor requirements outlined in House Bill 900.

Over the past few weeks, my co-worker Meghan and I have been contacting representatives and senators, noting why we think this bill would be impossible for book vendors, like BookPeople, to implement; therefore eliminating our existing relationships with schools and ultimately, eliminating jobs at our business.

HB 900 requires book vendors to rate books before selling them to schools. Expecting bookstores to personally read and rate every page of every book in print that might be ordered from them for a school is impossible. Book vendors do not create content, we fulfill orders for books. We rely on professional reviews and information provided by publishers to describe and categorize books for customers. The public, including librarians and educators, shop with us at-will in the bookstore, online, at events, they place orders via purchase orders, and we do not rate or question anyone's purchases.

This legislation would also require vendors to issue very subjective ratings for books sold to school districts that are in active circulation, before September 1, 2023, as well as provide the list to the Texas Education Agency. For bookstores, this bill would require us to retroactively report every book ever purchased from us at the bookstore registers, at a festival (like the Texas Book Festival), at an author event, or any other public setting that may have been bought for circulation at a school. This is not possible as we have never been required to keep these kinds of records and do not have a way to create them. Due to the lack of records, it would be impossible for us to rate all books we may have sold that are still in active circulation after 52 years in business.

I urge the committee to VOTE NO on HB 900 due to lack of feasibility. I'm available for questions anytime.

Thank you for your consideration.

Charley Rejsek

CEO

BookPeople

603 N. Lamar Blvd, ATX 78703

charley@bookpeople.com

713-703-5259