

# **FAMILY ISSUES FACT SHEET**

No. 2025-11 (November 2025)

## **HB2001 APP STORE ACCOUNTABILITY ACT**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The number of minors regularly accessing online content grows every day, and many of them do so through app stores. In many instances, these apps require minors to enter contracts—via terms and conditions agreements—which a minor cannot legally consent to. Unfortunately, children can be exposed to harmful content through these unregulated apps and can even be contacted by bad actors through in-app chat features. While harmful content accessed through internet browsers has been addressed through age-verification legislation, app stores lack any comparable restrictions.

There has been a growing call from parents to address online safety issues. The Digital Childhood Alliance found that **82% of parents want more control and the ability to approve what their children view online.**<sup>4</sup> Parents face an ever-growing struggle to keep up with changing technology and the content their children may be exposed to. The App Store Accountability Act gives parents the necessary tools to protect their children from harmful content, establishes parents as the consenting adults regarding terms and conditions, and holds app stores accountable for the content they provide. Furthermore, it provides a standardized rating system for apps.

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### **BACKGROUND**

App age recommendations and descriptions of content on app stores often vary drastically. Social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Snapchat are known to contain explicit sexual content and are listed as **12+** on the Apple App Store. Further, all three of these apps allow strangers to contact children.

This issue is gaining national attention—not just in Arizona. Utah led the effort to protect children online by establishing this act in 2025.<sup>1</sup> Texas soon followed Utah’s example, with other states moving to pass similar legislation.<sup>2</sup> The bill has also been introduced at the federal level by Congressman John James.<sup>3</sup>

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### **WHAT THE BILL DOES**

- Gives parents the ability to be more involved in their child’s online activities by requiring parents to present an ID to approve their child downloading an app.
- Prevents app stores from selling and distributing private information.

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- Ensures minors are not entering into contracts they cannot reasonably consent to.
  - Bars parties from enforcing contracts signed by minors.
  - Holds app stores liable for distributing material harmful to children.
  - Establishes a standardized rating system for app stores.
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## TALKING POINTS

1. **Parents want more control over what their children are exposed to.** Parents want more control and the ability to approve what their children view. Parents cannot possibly monitor their children's technology use, as the generational knowledge gap makes it difficult to keep up with children finding ways around parental restrictions.
  2. **Children cannot enter into contracts.** This bill focuses on the validity of contracts rather than content moderation. Children who enter into contracts are sharing their data with providers without the mental capacity to understand the terms of a contract.
  3. **Standardized Rating System.** App stores often use rating systems that are inaccurate or inconsistent. Between the two major app stores—Apple and Google—there is no standardized rating system. This legislation standardizes the system, enabling greater parental discernment.
  4. **Responsibility of Providers.** Just as a liquor store, movie theater, or gun shop is liable for providing inappropriate goods to minors, an app store should likewise be liable for providing inappropriate content to minors.
  5. **There is a generational disconnect in this discussion.** Older generations often view social media and apps only through the benefits the technology provides to them, without recognizing the dangers these platforms pose to the mind of a developing minor. This proposal bridges that gap.
  6. **This is possible.** The App Store Accountability Act has already been passed in both Utah and Texas. With a federal version of the bill introduced, the Act has demonstrated both its feasibility and popularity in other states.
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## CONCLUSION

As the number of children accessing online material grows, the potential dangers to children grow as well. These dangers can have long-lasting effects, and the personal data of children is being gathered and sold by app stores—an action these minors have no ability to consent to. The legislature is in a unique position to provide parents with greater ability to watch over their children. The App Store Accountability Act puts parents in control of what their children are exposed to and ensures parents know the full extent of the content and features an app provides.

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<sup>1</sup>Weiler Todd, S.B. 142. App Store Accountability Act (2025). *Utah Legislature* <https://le.utah.gov/~2025/bills/static/SB0142.html>

<sup>2</sup>Paxton, Kolkhorst S.B. 2420 App Store Accountability Act. (2025). *Texas Legislature* <https://capitol.texas.gov/tlodocs/89R/billtext/html/SB02420S.HTM>

<sup>3</sup>John James, App Store Accountability Act, (2025). *119TH CONGRESS* <https://james.house.gov/uploadedfiles/jamesappstoreaccountabilityact.pdf>

<sup>ff</sup><sup>4</sup>Fabrizio et al, (2025). Memorandum *Digital Childhood Alliance* [https://www.digitalchildhoodalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/DCA-National-Poll-Memo\\_ASAA-5-1-25.pdf](https://www.digitalchildhoodalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/DCA-National-Poll-Memo_ASAA-5-1-25.pdf)

<sup>5</sup>S.B. 142 hearing (January 28, 2025). *Senate Transportation, Public Utilities, Energy, and Technology Committee*, <https://le.utah.gov/av/committeeArchive.jsp?timelineID=264997>

<sup>6</sup>Kupper, Nick (2025). H.B. 2112 <https://www.azleg.gov/legtext/57leg/1r/bills/hb2112s.pdf>

<sup>7</sup>Canadian Center for Child Protection. (2022). *Reviewing the Enforcement of App Age Ratings in Apple's App Store and Google Play*, <https://protectchildren.ca/en/resources-research/app-age-ratings-report/>