

App Store Accountability vs. App-by-App Regulation

Two approaches. One clear winner for families.

There are two ways to protect children from harmful apps: hold the centralized app stores accountable at the point of download, or try to regulate each app individually. This chart shows why the App Store Accountability Act is the only practical, scalable solution.

	App Store Accountability Act	App-by-App Regulation
Point of Regulation	App stores — the single gateway every app must pass through to reach a device.	Each individual app: thousands of separate companies, platforms, and products.
Scope	One standard covers every app category — social, gaming, AI, messaging — automatically.	Patchwork coverage; new app categories require new legislation every time.
Parental Involvement	Parents are asked before the download with clear, plain-language disclosures.	Parents must discover risks after installation and manage controls app-by-app.
Age Verification	Done once at the store level, using privacy-preserving methods — no government ID required.	Inconsistent; many apps rely on self-reported birthdays or skip verification entirely.
Enforceability	Two well-resourced U.S. companies (Apple, Google) can be held accountable.	Regulators must chase thousands of apps, many overseas or short-lived.
Developer Burden	Developers are not required to build their own verification or consent systems.	Every developer must independently verify age and manage consent, raising barriers.
Effectiveness	Prevents children from reaching harmful content before exposure begins.	Reacts to harm after it occurs; protection comes too late for many families.
Future-Proof	Covers AI apps, AR platforms, and whatever comes next — automatically.	Requires new laws for every new technology and platform type.

The bottom line for lawmakers

The App Store Accountability Act is already law in Utah, Texas, Louisiana, California, and Alabama. It is practical, enforceable, bipartisan, and future-proof. Model legislation is available upon request.

**Request
Model Bill**