



March 6, 2019

Chair Doherty and Members of the House Education Committee:

On behalf of Basic Rights Oregon, I respectfully request your support for HB 2023 to provide more inclusive education and curriculums for all Oregon students.

Basic Rights Oregon works to ensure that all lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) Oregonians experience equality with a focus on transgender and racial justice. We support HB 2023 because it will positively impact LGBTQ youth and people of color in Oregon's schools.

According to the Oregon Safe Schools and Communities Coalition, LGBTQ youth are up to three times more likely to miss school based on fears of bullying, harassment or intimidation and one out of two LGBTQ students in Oregon experience bias-based bullying related to gender identity or sexual orientation. When students face these overwhelming issues at school, it makes it incredibly difficult to focus and succeed. Yet when historically underrepresented and underserved people are represented in the curriculum they're learning, it results in fewer instances of bullying and helps to create a positive educational environment.

When House Bill 2845 passed during last session, it provided an important direction for the State Board of Education to adopt ethnic studies standards into social studies curriculum. Now, HB 2023 is taking an expanded next step. By including the history of Native Americans; people of African, Asian, Pacific Island, Chicano, Latino, or Middle Eastern descent; women; people with disabilities; immigrants and refugees; and people who are LGBTQ, Oregon schools will better reflect their diverse student body and foster an affirming, inclusive environment where all students can thrive.

Thank you for your consideration in supporting HB 2023.

Nancy Haque
Executive Director