

Submitter: Kaitlynn Edrington
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure: SB1583

I am writing in support of SB 1583. Challenges against this bill are attempts to limit LGBTQ+ and diverse materials in the classroom, and the learning experience these materials provide for students. As a middle school library assistant, these materials, among other diverse titles and subject matters, are crucial in schools. I have students almost daily voice appreciation for having symbols and materials in support of the challenges they are going through with these experiences, and how beneficial it is for them to be heard and reflected in the materials at school, how the classroom and the library becomes a safe space for them.

Even for students who aren't reflected in these materials, it is extremely beneficial and important to introduce other views and perspectives to students in efforts for community and diversity. Appropriate but diverse materials help educate students to how diverse and unique the world we are in is, and is important to give this varied perspective and education. These materials are educational, and stripping them from classrooms and school libraries will end up taking away opportunities for students. Students I see everyday are given options in their reading that allow them to explore the lives of others, as well as see their own struggles reflected to them and made relatable. A student finding a book they can relate to, and that helps them through a challenging situation or experience is irreplaceable, and limiting materials in classrooms and school libraries will take this opportunity away.

I believe SB 1583 will help schools and administration have clear guidelines on compliance to the prohibition of discrimination, as well as further help prevent book bans and removal of material attempts that are unnecessary and further harm rather than help students. It is important that students have educational texts available to them, especially when they need it, and I hope to see SB 1583 pass with added amendment from the Oregon Library Association.