

Submitter: Donald Holt
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure: SB1583

I oppose SB1583. Parents are the first and primary educators of their children. We need to leave curriculum control at the local level where citizen parents may apply their intellect and moral discretion. We all know that greater government control is inefficient, costly, and a poor substitute for local control. Parents can have greater influence at the local school board level than at the ballot box. Local control is appropriate and important. The bill takes what is rightfully a parent/local decision and gives it to a small group of state employees. There is a danger here. There is nothing to prevent such employees from using this power to advance political, religious, or social positions with the intention of indoctrinating the students with their agendas. This is not a good model. The state is not a good parent nor teacher.

FOCUS. School boards need to exercise discretion in book selection for textbooks and library books, with parental influence. Grade schools in particular need to make selections that do not adversely influence the per-adolescent students. This could become a burden on teachers, students, and parents. Our public schools need to stay with the basics, ensure students are learning, and help those who need it. Most of all, students need to be taught how to learn. This bill is likely to create greater distraction from these learning ideals.

LIBRARIES. We have public libraries where a broader selection of books is typically available. This is a resource available to most students. Are we teaching them how to use a library?

NO DISCRIMINATION. The list of groups that shall not be discriminated against in the existing ORS 337.260 is a sorely incomplete, far from including all. It misses out on many nationalities and religions. It does not mention Mormons or Catholics or Hindus or Muslims or Making such a list in a law is inappropriate. It leads to more discrimination by highlighting who is part of a protected class and, by omission, who is not. There is no need to identify by race, religion, ethnicity, immigration status, sexual orientation, or country of origin. We need to simply respect all and not discriminate against any one.

NOT AN EMERGENCY. I do not see that this is in anyway an "emergency" in our state. Choosing to label it as such cheapens the meaning of the word. It's akin to crying "WOLF" when there is not a wolf around.

