

# **Support for SB 1583**

## **Testimony for the Senate Committee On Education**

**February 9, 2024**

Chair Dembrow, Vice Chair Weber, and members of the Committee, my name is Amy Hofer. I'm writing as a constituent of Senator Frederick's to publicly thank him for sponsoring this bill and to voice my support for SB 1583.

This important bill will prevent discrimination when selecting textbooks, instructional materials, program materials or library books in public schools. It is aligned with statewide equity goals, exemplified by Oregon's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan, and brings needed clarity to help schools and school boards comply with the prohibition on discrimination required by ORS 659.850.

As a librarian I read with dismay about the explosion of attempts to censor library and curriculum materials in public schools. Studies show that these are often blatant attempts to suppress the voices and experiences of people with minoritized identities - usually LGBTQ+ and people of color. SB 1583 will prevent these book bans and removal attempts.

It is important for all students to see themselves reflected in the media provided by public institutions such as schools and libraries. Librarians and educators have the training and expertise to carefully select materials that reflect our student populations in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner.

Oregon must take a stand against book bans. I hope you will pass SB 1583 with the proposed amendment from the Oregon Library Association. Thank you for your support on this important issue!