

Submitter: Jim Scheppke
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure: SB1583

Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Weber, and Members of the Committee:

I write in strong support of SB 1583 that will prevent discrimination in the selection of library books and other instructional resources in public schools.

As the State Librarian of Oregon for two decades (1991-2011) it was my honor to work closely with certified teacher librarians in school libraries across the state. I observed their work, and they earned my highest respect for their professional ability to select the best and most appropriate books to engage students in their schools.

Section 4 of the bill will give our teacher librarians added clarity to comply with the prohibition on discrimination required by ORS 659.850. It may serve to prevent hateful attempts to censor books in our school libraries that have been carefully selected by our library professionals.

Across the country we are seeing organized efforts to remove books dealing with black history and gender identity and other topics that until now have been a necessary part of school library book collections. Oregon has been no exception to these efforts. That is why we need to pass SB 1583 in this session to turn back these efforts, without delay.

Please pass SB 1583 with the proposed amendments by the Oregon Library Association.

Sincerely,

Jim Scheppke, Salem