Submitter: Katie Anderson
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure: SB1583

I strongly support SB1583 having been an elementary school teacher who selected classroom books to support curriculum and free voluntary reading and currently as a public librarian who selects children's and teen materials. The proposed amendments to RS 336.082, 337.120 and 337.260 provide necessary clarification and guidance to ensure school administrators, school boards, and other responsible parties comply with existing anti-discrimination laws relating to the selection and removal of textbooks, instructional materials, program materials or library books.

Discrimination against any viewpoint, particularly those expressed by or of protected classes, is unconstitutional. The omission of the viewpoints of protected classes is also discrimination. Discriminatory omissions are a strategy for maintaining the status quo of privileged persons, harming all people—mostly those in protected classes, but also privileged people. Students at schools where protected class viewpoints are omitted are at an academic disadvantage when they apply for college and attend college courses by professors who assume they have received basic, inclusive and wholistic education in K-12. These students are lacking knowledge and educational experiences learning and discussing multiple, diverse viewpoints. They will be at significant disadvantage in college and later in their careers.

Students who are of a protected class continue to be under-represented in curriculum and literature. They need to see how their ancestors contributed to history, language arts, STEM, and the arts. They need to see themselves reflected in educational and enrichment materials to build confidence and see paths for their future. This is essential for their personal and academic success while they are students, as well as their professional success and community engagement in the future.

Please vote yes for SB1583. Thank you for your time and consideration.