

Submitter: Rebecca Chernay
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure: SB1583

Hello Oregon Legislature--

My name is Rebecca and I am a youth librarian. Intellectual freedom matters for all ages. Youth discover things about the world around them, see themselves reflected in stories, and get to explore new ideas and identities. SB1583 will protect that freedom. I am supporting SB 1583 because it will prevent discrimination when selecting textbooks, instructional materials, program materials or library books in public schools and hope that you will vote to support the bill when it comes up for a vote (in committee/on the floor). SB1583 brings needed clarity to help schools and school boards comply with the prohibition on discrimination required by ORS 659.850.

The US is experiencing an explosion of attempts to censor library and curriculum materials in our public schools, and Oregon is no exception. Many of these attempts are blatant in their opposition to LGBTQ+ materials or those of Black creators. Black children, queer children exist and deserve to see themselves in things read and discussed in school. These censorship attempts intend to limit the materials available to Oregon students based solely on the constitutionally protected viewpoints of those materials. I believe SB 1583 will help prevent these book bans and removal attempts.

As a librarian, we know it is important for students to see themselves reflected in their community. I believe it is critical to carefully select books, magazines, educational videos and experiences that reflect our student populations in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner. I want to make sure that important educational texts and materials are available to those students who need it.

Please pass SB 1583 with the proposed amendment from the Oregon Library Association.

Thank you,
Rebecca