

Submitter: Madelynn Sturm
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure: SB1583

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Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Weber, and Members of the Committee, for the record, my name is Madelynn Sturm. I am a sophomore at Eastern Oregon University in LaGrande, Oregon. Thank you for the opportunity to speak before you today. Please support SB 1583 and pass the bill to the Floor at your earliest convenience. The US is experiencing an explosion of attempts to censor library and curriculum materials in our public schools, and Oregon is no exception.

I am from a rural area, Union Oregon, 45 minutes east of Pendleton. I am part of the LGBTQ+ community and as a young high school student, it was extremely important for me to see myself in books and media. Many of these attempts are blatant in their opposition to LGBTQ+ materials. Seeing yourself and the stories that represent people like you in books is a human right. According to the Trevor Project, 44% of LGBTQ youth in Oregon seriously considered suicide in 2022. If these stories are restricted, that number will rise. These censorship attempts intend to limit the materials available to Oregon students based solely on the constitutionally protected viewpoints of those materials. It is extremely important for students to see themselves in books and media. SB 1583 will help prevent these book bans and removal attempts. This bill will prevent discrimination when selecting textbooks, instructional materials, program materials, or library books in public schools and I hope that you will vote to support the bill when it comes up for a vote. Thank you for the opportunity to speak before you today.