

Submitter: Megan Waterman
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure: SB1583

Chair Fahey, Vice Chairs Helfrich and Kropf and Members of the House Committee on Rules,

My name is Megan Waterman, I am a parent of 6 young adults, 2 of which graduated from Canby High School. I am also the owner of The Book Nook in Canby Oregon. As a parent that has raised both biracial and lgbtqia+ children I am passionate about the freedom to read and the importance of youth seeing themselves on the page as well as experiencing stories of others different from themselves. This grows both empathy and self awareness.

Today I am testifying to urge your support of SB1583A, which will prohibit discrimination based on the race, religion, ability, country of origin, sexuality, or gender of the individuals featured in the content of educational and library materials in public elementary and secondary schools in Oregon.

All students deserve to see themselves represented in the books, materials, and classrooms they learn from and to learn about diverse communities and people. Book bans are tactics used by small groups of extremists to erase and silence the voices, lived experiences, and histories of our most marginalized communities.

During the past few years I have had the unique opportunity to hear from parents, teachers and youth in our community and witness the distress that this book banning has brought to all of our lives. The hurt and disruption that book censorship has brought to our schools and communities has broken my heart. Anyone that knows their history will know that the censorship of knowledge is a dangerous path.

Students do not lose their constitutional rights to freedom of speech or expression at the schoolhouse gates and book bans and censorship have no place in Oregon schools. Please support the freedom to read and learn by advancing SB1583A.
Thank you, Megan Waterman