

Submitter: Tim Allen

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Rules

Measure: SB1583

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

I respectfully ask that you opposed this measure.

In the area of education, report after report shows that Oregon is falling behind in our ability to educate our school children in comparison to other states. In no report I am aware of does any report indicate that the reading material in our libraries is contributing to this failure by Oregon schools as a reason for these poor results.

It is time that our State put more effort into understanding these short comings and less time in trying to be politically correct or leading the nation on social issues. Once our children have mastered the basic skills necessary for life as an adult, then perhaps we can take the time to review what is in our libraries.

Frankly as it relates to school libraries and their reading material you have a large number of wonderful volunteers all across the State who have a vested interest in making sure the materials align with the wishes of the community members, the School Board members. This measure is an effort to reduce their and therefore their community's ability to have a say in what material their children are exposed to.

I also read the troubling letter from the Oregon State library association who should be maintaining a neutral position but crafted the letter in a manner to make certain you understand they support the State taking over responsibility for what reading materials are in the schools.

They offer the following information, "No matter the stated reason for a challenge, one pattern is clear: challenged materials are disproportionately about, by, or center the story of people from an underrepresented race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, or disability" and in it add that, "70% of the In 2022-23, 10% of the titles were challenged explicitly because they included LGBTQ+ content"

While it appears the public does not get the privilege of reviewing these claims through links that may be provided to you, I would like to point out that, "sex, sexual orientation, gender identity" are referenced specifically and an area where every recent news article would suggest these complains come from. ORS 163.315 asserts that a person under 18 years of age is unable to consent to a sexual act, yet in many cases it has been shown that our libraries have been including sexual graphic

material which could be included in any of the topics in these 3 topics. I would argue that the reason only 10% of the titles were challenged due to LGBTQ+ content is because it is the sexualization period that the objections are raised, LGBTQ+ topics are inherently sexual in nature. Those labels are inherently sexual in nature, you are describing the sexual preference of the person. It is troubling that the State library is covertly supporting sexual material in this manner in the public school system where the vast majority of children are under that age of consent.

The State library system refers to this issue as a large workload, I don't believe it is in the States best interest to insert itself into this problem. What we need right now is the State to focus on the core skills our children aren't meeting benchmarks on.

Let our great School Board volunteers continue to navigate this sensitive topic.

Thank-you,
Tim Allen