

TO: House Committee on Rules  
RE: Support for SB1583A

Date: Tuesday, March 5, 2024

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

My name is Karen Emmerling. I am a bookstore owner and I care about the freedom to read. 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.

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,

Karen Emmerling