



Chair Frederick, Vice Chair Webber, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Cynthia Branger Muñoz, and I am submitting this testimony on behalf of the Oregon Education Association (OEA). OEA proudly represents over 41,000 educators and education service professionals across the state, including teachers, paraeducators, bus drivers, custodians, nutrition specialists, community college faculty and staff, and—most relevant to today’s discussion—our school librarians.

OEA strongly supports SB 1098, the Freedom to Read Act, because it upholds the professional expertise of school librarians and ensures that students have access to a broad range of educational materials.

School librarians are not just caretakers of books—they are literacy experts, research guides, and champions of student learning. They curate collections that encourage intellectual curiosity, support academic growth, and help young people develop critical thinking skills. Yet, across the country and here in Oregon, they face increasing challenges to their professional judgment as efforts to censor materials rise.

We have seen a growing number of book challenges and removals, often focused on books that represent a wide range of perspectives and experiences. These efforts undermine librarians’ ability to provide well-rounded collections that serve all students and limit students’ opportunities to engage with different ideas.

SB 1098 ensures that decisions about library collections and instructional materials are made based on professional standards, not external pressures. The bill prohibits book bans and censorship that are rooted in discrimination, establishes a clear and transparent process for reviewing concerns, and protects students’ First Amendment rights to access information. It also reduces the financial and legal risks for school districts by preventing costly litigation over unconstitutional censorship actions.

Oregon voters and parents overwhelmingly trust educators and librarians to make informed decisions about appropriate materials for students. In fact, research shows that a small number of individuals are responsible for the majority of book challenges—often based on personal beliefs rather than broader educational considerations. Librarians should not have to fear professional consequences for doing their jobs, nor should students be denied access to books that help them learn and grow.

SB 1098 is not about limiting parental involvement or restricting local decision-making—it is about ensuring that schools have a fair and thoughtful process in place for addressing concerns. It is about standing with our school librarians, educators, and students to uphold Oregon’s strong tradition of education that values learning, inquiry, and open discussion.

On behalf of OEA and the thousands of school librarians, teachers, and education professionals we represent, I urge you to pass SB 1098 and support the role of librarians in providing students with access to a full and balanced education.