

Submitter: Rainbow Olmstead

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1098

My name is Rainbow. I use they/them pronouns. I live in Salem. I work as an artisan - I knit cute little animals, like opossums with little pouches on their bellies. I didn't get a chance to testify at the meeting because there were so many people testifying, so I'm submitting my notes (slightly modified for clarity) as written testimony.

I'm writing to support SB 1098, which I understand as a bill that will prevent discriminatory book bannings. I believe that children have the right to access important knowledge that will help them learn and grow.

I am a transgender person. As a child, I did not know the word "transgender". Not knowing was harmful to me. I didn't understand why I felt the way I did. I didn't know there were others like me.

It was life-changing to learn the word "transgender" as an older teen. Suddenly, I knew that there was hope, and I could get medical treatment someday. Today, I am happy. I'm confident enough to speak at government hearings!

If I had read about transgender people as a child, I could have accessed that hope sooner. Little Rainbow deserved to know they weren't broken.

I hope you will all protect children's access to knowledge, and vote yes on SB 1098. Thank you.