

Submitter: Rose Thormahlen  
On Behalf Of: Authors Against Book Bans  
Committee: Senate Committee On Education  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1098

Chair Frederick, Co-Chair Weber, and members of the committee.

My name is Rose Thormahlen from Corvallis and I am writing to urge you to support SB1098, 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 K-12 public schools in Oregon.

In Oregon, we have seen countless efforts to ban books that feature LGBTQIA2S+, Black people, Indigenous people and other people of color. topics or individuals and restrict access for students to understand the positive contributions of individuals of marginalized identities who have contributed to our society. This bill creates a statewide standard ensuring freedom of information both to users of that information, as well as providers of that information, for example librarians and educators. It also ensures students have access to accurate and representative information about their histories, communities and selves.

As a children's book author, I have seen first hand the power of story. Children and teens who see themselves represented in fiction are not only more likely to become and remain readers, but they are also more likely to feel worthy, loved, and supported. Every time I visit a school to talk about storytelling and being an author, I am reminded what it would have meant to me as a young person to see someone like me in the pages of my favorite books, having adventures and saving the world. Every child deserves the chance to be reflected in the books they read, and this bill would help ensure that in Oregon, they can.

SB1098 protects student's right to see themselves represented in the books, materials and classrooms they learn from and to learn about diverse communities and people.

Thank you for taking the time to hear my story today. We urge you to vote YES to support and advance SB1098.

Thank you,  
Rose Thormahlen