

Submitter: Mason Durfee

On Behalf Of: Committee: Senate Committee On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1098

I write to offer support for SB 1098 which prohibits book banning. I know how important it was for me to be exposed to a wide range of topics and materials as a student so that I could better understand and participate in the world around me. Some misguided adults think certain subjects, such as racism, or gender, are too difficult for children, but children are open to learning and curious about everything. Books can help children find the words to express themselves, to learn about people who are different from them and open up a child's imagination. It is vital that adults in education and in lawmaking make age appropriate books available to our students. For these reasons, I urge you to please pass SB 1098.

This bill creates a statewide standard ensuring freedom of information both to users of that information, as well as providers of that information, like myself. It also ensures students have access to accurate and representative information about their histories, communities and selves. SB1098 protects students' rights to see themselves represented in books, materials and classrooms, and to learn about diverse communities and people

I support SB 1098 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. Students must have opportunities to choose the books they want to read, even if they are about different ideas or experiences, because reading and access to information helps them learn about the world and be better thinkers and do-ers. They deserve to see their own experiences, identities, and communities reflected in the books they read. Books can be used as tools to consider and develop values and opinions. Students need access to quality information also in order to make informed decisions. Our freedoms that are worth standing up for. Book bans pose a threat to freedom of speech and choice. For these reasons, I support SB 1098 for students now and generations in the future.

Thank you,

Mason Durfee

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