

Submitter: Eric Phetteplace
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1098

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

My name is Eric Phetteplace from Gresham and I am writing to urge you to support Senate Bill 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.

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 librarian, I know first-hand the value of free access to information and diverse representation. Students who have free access to diverse materials are more likely to be exposed to new ideas and grow intellectually. Diverse students who see themselves represented in the works they read have increased self-esteem.

Furthermore, book bans are a tremendous waste of school resources at a time when education funding is already constrained. Let schools focus on educating students instead of caving to the demands of a vocal and outraged minority. The people who protest any representation of sexual minorities as pornographic have no problem allowing the bible in school, which contains depictions of rape, violence against women, pedophilia, slavery, murder, genocide, and incest. They are hypocrites who do not care about education or protecting Oregon's children, they only for about the promulgation of their wildly unpopular and bigoted worldview.

Senate Bill 1098 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 Senate Bill 1098.

Thank you, Eric Phetteplace