

Dmitry White
11424 Hazelgreen Road NE
Silverton, Oregon 97381

March 3, 2025

SUBJECT: Support for Oregon SB-1098

The Honorable Michael Dembrow
Chair, Committee on Education
Oregon Senate
900 Court Street Northeast
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Senator Dembrow and Committee,

My name is Dmitry White, and I am a volunteer elected Director on the Silver Falls Library District Board, located in and around Silverton, Oregon. The thoughts expressed here are my own, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Board or any of its members.

I urge you to support and pass Senate Bill 1098.

In Oregon and across the country, we have seen efforts to censor books from school and other public libraries. These book censorship efforts tend to target materials that are written or created by or for members of historically marginalized communities that have faced historic exclusion based on race, religious expression, or sexual and gender identities. This bill would provide a clear standard that while local control of library content is appropriate, it can not be done based on library material's association with a protected class of individual.

Some regions of our state are very diverse, and some regions are very homogenous. But all people in every corner of our state should have access to materials that open the world up to them; where they can either learn about people very different from them, or see themselves represented in the books and other materials freely available at their library. Our populations should absolutely not be subjected to government censorship based on racial, religious, or sex or gender bias.

In addition to serving on our local library district board, I am also an Army veteran with two combat tours. I swore an Oath to the Constitution of the United States, which guarantees freedom of speech and expression. An essential element of that freedom is the access to differing and dissenting points of view. A shocking number of challenges to public library materials in the last few years have come from just eleven people nationwide. There is no way that eleven people scattering their attempts at censorship across this country should limit

education and intellectual freedom in our local jurisdictions; and prejudice and bigotry should never play any role in removing materials from our public libraries.

Working with our local library, I have been impressed by the dedication I have observed from librarians: their unwavering willingness to set aside personal opinions in the service of their commitment to intellectual freedom and diversity of thought. I believe that the Oregon Library Association supports this bill because it recognizes that when different and dissenting voices are silenced, our democracy suffers.

I encourage you to listen to librarians across this state, and I encourage you to pass Senate Bill 1098.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dmitry White', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dmitry White