

Submitter: McKenzie Zamber
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1098

My name is McKenzie from Grants Pass 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 mother of school-aged children, I find it increasingly important that they are not restricted or limited in their ability to learn about the experiences of other cultures and identities, nor should they be discouraged from learning more about their own history, identity, race, etc. For so many children, books are the primary way for them to learn about the lived experiences of others who don't share their race, culture, gender identity, or sexual orientation. If these stories are banned, empathy and understanding for others are sure to fade soon after. I want my children to grow up in a kind and understanding world (and state!!) and that requires that they are able to read and learn about the rich lives and histories told in the very books many are trying to ban.

Thank you for reading my testimony and please support Senate Bill 1098!

- McKenzie