

Submitter: Amanda Graham
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1098

My name is Amanda Graham, a high school librarian from Portland Public Schools, 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.

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 high school librarian, I know that students need to see themselves represented in our diverse library collections, and they benefit from seeing the diverse lives of others. This is an issue of the Freedom of Speech. Young people, and ALL people, deserve the right to a range of stories and perspectives. Protections to our most vulnerable populations provided by Senate Bill 1098 will help to ensure this.

Additionally, the protections offered by SB 1098 will help schools efficiently and consistently deal with book bans and challenges, freeing librarians to teach critical thinking skills, literacy awareness, and collaboration skills--all of which are sought after in today's workforce.

Thank you for advancing SB 1098.