

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

My name is Rian Debner from Portland 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 for 20 years, and as queer and nonbinary person, I know how important it is for our youth to see their stories and identities reflected in the books they read, and to know that they are not alone and there is nothing wrong with them. I support this bill so that students across the state can have access to information about all histories and cultures in their classrooms and in their school libraries.

Students also need to opportunity to learn about others who are different from them, to prepare them to live in the real world, which is diverse in both people and ideas. They need to be able to engage with different ideas with curiosity and a willingness to expand their horizons; they need to be able to approach people who are different from them with empathy and kindness. Having access to a diverse range of educational and library materials is a key component to these learning opportunities

[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.

I urge you to vote YES to support and advance [Senate Bill 1098](#).

Thank you,

Rian Debner
Portland, OR