

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

My name is Christina Margaret Tobey 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.

I am a gay woman born in 1977; I grew up with zero representation in the media and books. I know the pain and confusion of not seeing myself represented in books. I also know the pain of discrimination when people don't learn about other communities. It leads to ignorance which leads to hate. Because of my own experiences navigating a world where I was not seen or valued, I never want other children to feel this. It is vital for every child to see themselves in the books they read and learn about other communities-- books with diversity create more empathy.

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.

Thank you for taking the time to hear my story today. I urge you to vote YES to support and advance [Senate Bill 1098](#).