

March 4, 2025

Chair Frederick, Co-Chair Weber, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Nikole Emerson from Durham Elementary in the Tigard-Tualatin School District. 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 kindergarten teacher and parent of a queer young adult, I put immense value on being able to present students with mirrors and windows that allow them to learn about the world beyond their own experience. It is critical that our students see themselves and others in the books that they have access to. This is an easy way to build tolerance and acceptance at a young age in order to make the world a more kind and welcoming place. I want to be able to respond to the group of students that are in front of me each year instead of being limited by political whims.

[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.

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

Thank you,

Nikole Emerson