

Submitter: Susan Fenton
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1098

To Chair Freder

ick, Co-chair Weber, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Susan Fenton , District Teaher-Librarian -Aide for Siuslaw School District in Florencr , Oregon. I am writing you to urge you to support Senate Bill 1098, which will prohibit discrimination based on the race, religion, ability, county 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 urge you to vote YES for SB 1098, as Siuslaw School District's School Board is currently considering banning the book Flamer, by Mike Curato. At their last board meeting, Siuslaw's School Board also mentioned the possibility of eliminating the District Teacher-Librarian position altogether, which would further limit access to library media resources for our children. Flamer is a powerful suicide prevention story about a BIPOC, LGBTQIA+ youth. As a K12 Teacher-Librarian, I know how important it is for our youth to see their stories reflected in the books they read; books also serve as a window into someone else's life, which is extremely important for our rural, geographically isolated students. When books about historically disenfranchised groups – including Black, Indigenous, people of color and LGBTQ+ people – are banned in libraries and schools, this signals that discrimination, exclusion, and othering of youth and students with these identities is acceptable.