

Isabelle Coronado
House Committee on Education
RE: Support for SB 1098
4/23/25

Chair Neron, Vice Chairs Dobson and McIntire, and members of the committee,

My name is Isabelle Coronado and I am a college student from Willamette University. I am writing to urge you to support SB 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 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 college student originally from California, I've had firsthand experience reading so-called "banned" books—and finding deep comfort in them. One example that stands out to me is *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*. Despite being banned in several states, this book resonated with me on a personal level. I know I'm not alone—there are so many students who see themselves in those pages or could find the understanding they need, if only they had access.

Taking away a student's right to read a wide range of books limits their mental and emotional development. Including diverse stories and perspectives in school curriculums is essential for young minds. It encourages empathy, critical thinking, and a more open worldview. Books that discuss serious topics—when tailored appropriately for their age group—can help students make sense of their own experiences and the world around them.

Why should someone else's discomfort decide what others are allowed to read? Censorship isn't protection—it's limitation. And it isn't fair.

SB 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 SB 1098.

Thank you,
Isabelle Coronado