

Cassie Segura
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 Cassie and I'm a college student at Willamette University in Salem, Oregon. 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 queer person I have learned so much about myself and felt represented through books, many of which are now banned in my home state of Texas. I currently have many younger family members going through the public school system in Texas and the banning of books limits the access they have to important perspectives, representation, and essential learning about human beings. It also creates a taboo about very normal topics and conversations surrounding gender, sexuality, and race that creates harder conversations for students in marginalized communities that could be alleviated through students having access to books that address these topics. Having access to books through libraries and bookstores that are commonly banned in high school had a huge positive impact on me understanding myself and others around me. I believe all students and youth deserve to have access and the freedom to read. Students here in Oregon deserve to see themselves represented and be given the opportunity to learn about others through literature. Education and knowledge is a powerful tool to raise the next generation to be intelligent and empathetic and banning books is a step away from that. I support this bill because I have seen the negative impacts of banning books and have felt the positive impacts of having access to these important books.

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,
Cassie Segura