

Maddee Reid
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 Maddee Reid originally from Brentwood, California but now reside in Salem, Oregon while attending 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.

Reading didn't come naturally to me as a child. My teachers often advised my parents to encourage me to read more outside of class, hoping it would help me catch up to my peers. The only public library in our town hadn't seen an update since 1948—the year the town was incorporated. It wasn't just the difficulty I had with reading that held me back; it was also the lack of interest in the books we were assigned at school. After school each day, my grandmother—a former elementary teacher—would bring me to that very library. There, she patiently worked with me, helping me improve both my comprehension and my reading aloud. This became a routine that lasted for over two years, until I reached fifth grade.

That library wasn't just important to me—it served many kids in our community. Its collection, though modest, offered a surprising range of books. With the support of the librarians and access to stories that matched my pace and sparked my curiosity, I was able to grow as a reader. I truly believe I wouldn't have made it to such a prestigious university without that early support. Representation in reading material matters. Kids should see themselves in the stories they read. This goes beyond simply protecting our First Amendment rights—it's about creating opportunities for children to fall in love with reading. When a book ignites imagination and curiosity, it can change the trajectory of a child's life.

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,
Maddee Reid