

Submitter: Jude Welton  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Education  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1098

Jude Welton  
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 Jude Welton from Bend.

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 trans student in high school, the ever-present book bans around our country have become increasingly worrisome. Not only is this limit on free speech unconstitutional, these bans represent attempts by our government to suppress the sharing of ideas. These bans often focus on books about queer or BIPOC kids. However, kids will be trans, gay, and otherwise gender-non-confirming whether they have access to a picture book about the topic or not. The argument that these books 'sexualize' children is simply false – is my existence inherently sexual? This point of view seems to me, and many of my peers, far more damaging than reading any book. In supporting this bill, I hope to prevent some of the hateful rhetoric that is being aimlessly spread.

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.