

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

I'm writing with enthusiasm and urgency to voice my **strong support for Senate Bill 1098 – Freedom to Read**. This bill matters not just for students today, but for the future of democracy in Oregon.

At its core, SB 1098 protects a basic truth: **everyone deserves access to books and stories that reflect the full diversity of who we are**, our cultures, identities, histories, and ideas. Banning books because they make some people uncomfortable isn't just unfair, it's dangerous. When government officials censor materials based on race, gender identity, sexual orientation, or religion, they're sending a message that some voices don't belong. That's not education, it's ERASURE.

Public schools should be places where curiosity is encouraged, where young people can learn to think critically, ask big questions, and understand different perspectives. That's how we grow. That's how we strengthen democracy.

The freedom to read is the freedom to think. It's the freedom to be seen. It's the freedom to imagine a better future. SB 1098 isn't just about protecting books, it's about protecting rights. About standing up to censorship. About saying loud and clear that Oregon believes in equality, in inclusion, and in the power of knowledge.

Please pass SB 1098. Our students, and our democracy, deserve nothing less.

Thank you,
Chelsea Donoho
Portland, Oregon