

Submitter: Karli Kottenko
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure: SB1583

I am writing to express my strong support for Senate Bill 1583, which addresses the crucial issue of preventing discrimination in the selection of textbooks, instructional materials, program materials, and library books in public schools. I sincerely hope that you will vote in favor of SB 1583 when it comes up for consideration in committee/on the floor.

SB 1583 plays a pivotal role in providing much-needed clarity for schools and school boards to comply with the prohibition on discrimination, as mandated by ORS 659.850. At a time when the United States is witnessing a surge in attempts to censor library and curriculum materials, Oregon is unfortunately no exception.

Many of these censorship endeavors are overtly directed against LGBTQ+ materials, with the aim of limiting the availability of certain materials based solely on the constitutionally protected viewpoints they represent. I firmly believe that SB 1583 can be a crucial deterrent against these discriminatory book bans and removal attempts.

In my capacity as a librarian in a rural district, I have observed firsthand the importance of students seeing themselves reflected in their community. It is imperative that we carefully curate books, magazines, educational videos, and experiences that resonate with our diverse student populations in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner.

One of the key elements of SB 1583 that resonates with me is its potential to ensure that important educational texts and materials are readily available to all students, regardless of their background or identity. This bill is not just a legal imperative but a moral obligation to create an inclusive educational environment that fosters understanding, empathy, and respect.

I urge you to pass SB 1583 with the proposed amendment from the Oregon Library Association. This amendment will further strengthen the bill and enhance its effectiveness in preventing discrimination in school materials. As someone working in a rural district, I can attest to the fact that there are students who often feel left out and discriminated against. SB 1583 represents a significant step towards addressing these issues and creating a more inclusive educational system.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I appreciate your dedication to ensuring a fair and equal educational experience for all Oregon students.

