

Submitter: Kristin Williams
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure: SB1583

Dear Chair Dembrow, Vice Chair Weber and Committee members,

I am writing in support of SB 1583, which will prevent discrimination when selecting instructional materials, including textbooks, program materials, or library books in public schools. I hope that you will vote to support the bill when it comes up for a vote.

SB1583 is designed to help schools and school boards comply with the prohibition on discrimination required by ORS 659.850. The US is experiencing an explosion of attempts to censor library and curriculum materials in our public schools, and Oregon is no exception. Often censorship attempts intend to limit the materials available to Oregon students based solely on the constitutionally protected viewpoints of those materials. I believe SB 1583 will help prevent these book bans and removal attempts that are based in discriminatory opinion.

As a librarian, I know it is important for students to see themselves reflected in their community and the materials available to them. I believe it is critical to carefully select books, magazines, educational videos, and provide services and experiences that reflect our student populations in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner. I also know that instructional and library materials are selected by trained professionals who consider the goals and objectives of their library or school and who select materials designed to support and enrich students' personal interests and learning. Librarians and teachers take this responsibility very seriously and design policies deliberately. We should allow them to do the jobs they are trained to do.

Please pass SB 1583 with the proposed amendment from the Oregon Library Association.

Thank you for your time,
Kristin Williams