

Submitter: Sascha McKeon
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure: SB1583

The US is experiencing an explosion of attempts to censor, diminish, and infringe on the rights and liberties of our minority populations, especially those of the LGBTQ+. Bringing library materials and curriculum into question is just the newest tactic and it should not be allowed to stand. I support SB 1583 which will prevent discrimination when selecting textbooks, instructional materials, program materials, or library books in public schools, and hope that you will vote to support the bill when it comes up for a vote (in committee/on the floor) for the following reasons:

- 1) Representation matters. Numerous studies involving mental health and student success demonstrate that it is important for students to see themselves reflected in their community. We believe it is critical to carefully select books, magazines, educational videos, and experiences that reflect our student populations in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner.
- 2) Science has proven there is no intrinsic difference amongst ethnic groups, no superior race; that neurodivergence is real and quantifiable; and that homosexuality and transsexuality are common themes in nature with a genetic basis. It does no good to pretend that these aspects are not part of the world we live in-- that does not reflect reality or encourage acceptance, diversity, or unity within our communities.
- 3) Suicide rates are climbing, especially amongst the youth-- many of whom feel like they are alone because there is a gap in representation. Important educational texts and materials must be available to those students who need it.