

Submitter: Beatrice Perkins
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure: SB1583

I am a sophomore high school student, growing up in a time where the restriction of information and representation is becoming normalized. And we **MUST** not allow this normalization. Firstly, freedom of speech has always been a core value of the United States, but furthermore, to deny children, particularly those in minority groups, the opportunity to see themselves represented, and to hear stories from authors like them, is harmful. And beyond that, it's harmful for others to remain ignorant and uneducated about people unlike them. Censoring these stories undermines the primary purpose of education, which is to raise learners, critical thinkers, and an empowered and open-minded generation of youth. We know that book bans have been consistently weaponized to disproportionately target stories of LGBTQ people, black people, and people/stories other marginalized groups. Protect students in our state from discriminatory book bans and censorship in our public schools, and consider the impact on youth like myself and my peers.