

Submitter: Roberta Richards
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure: SB1583

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in support of SB 1583.

SB 1583 will prevent discrimination when selecting textbooks, instructional materials, program materials or library books in public schools. As an academic librarian and a parent, I am sad that this legislation is necessary. But we are experiencing a shocking rise in censorship and attacks on marginalized communities in recent years.

The right wing zealots who call for the censorship of books that affirm the life experience of LGBTQ families and other marginalized groups pretend that they are doing so to “protect children.” If that were the case, they would focus their attention on the social media giants that monopolize their children’s attention and provide demonstrably dangerous content for children’s health and well being. Instead, they are launching assaults on libraries and schools, sometimes vicious attacks on the library staff and teachers who have dedicated their lives to the nurturing of children.

Why are they attacking libraries and schools and not the social media companies? Because libraries and schools are soft targets. Please show libraries and schools, and the dedicated professionals that work in these institutions, that the Oregon legislature has their back by providing them and the children that they support the tools to protect themselves from attacks by censors and zealots.

Thank you,