

Submitter: Lorie Vik
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure: SB1583

No matter which political side occupies the majority in state office, everyone deserves to be heard, to see themselves represented, and to learn about history in all its glory and darkness. History is complex and nuanced. So are people.

As noted in the State Library testimony for this bill, "No matter the stated reason for a challenge, one pattern is clear: challenged materials are disproportionately about, by, or center the story of people from an underrepresented race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, or disability - the same groups protected from discrimination by ORS 659.850. Over 70% of the items challenged in 2022-23 focus on one or more of those identities."

As a librarian, we know 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.

Echoing a fellow librarian, "Acknowledging people's existence and history is a matter of fact, not ideology. On the other hand, attempts to erase their existence and history in books and educational materials support an ideology that serves neither our students, nor communities." I urge you to support this bill.