

Submitter: Carla KC Hanson  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Rules  
Measure: SB1583

Chair Fahey and Members of the House Rules Committee,

In a 2023 Trevor Project survey, during the prior year...

54% of LGBTQ youth reported depression  
67% of LGBTQ youth reported anxiety  
24% of LGBT youth reported physical threats or attacks because of their sexual orientation or gender identity  
27% of LGBT youth reported physical threats or attacks because of their transgender or non-binary identity  
Less than 40% of LGBTQ youth felt their home was was supportive space  
41% of LGBTQ youth considered suicide, 4x the rate of straight youth. (Those rates were even higher for transgender youth and youth of color.)  
14% reported attempting suicide, (including almost 22% of Native American youth).

GLSEN's 2019 Oregon School Climate survey found that 63% of LGBTQ respondent students said that they were harassed in school because of their sexual orientation, and 53% reported harassment because of their gender identity.

80% of LGBT youth experiencing mental health difficulties wanted access to healthcare, but 56% of them reported that they were unable to get it. Of Oregon youth, even in a state with LGBTQ+ protections as well as anti-school bullying law that includes LGBTQ+ kids, 44% of them reported seriously considering suicide in the past year. 54% of transgender or non-binary Oregon youth reported considering suicide.

I remember too well the loneliness and isolation I felt growing up and knowing I was different. It wasn't until I moved 1500 miles away to college that I began to connect with the fact that I was LGBT. While many factors contributed to my finally realizing who I was, the most impactful influencers were the books and literature I read that actually described me and connected to my struggles.

From the research cited above, it's pretty clear that today's LGBTQ youth may live in a culture in which they can come to a more rapid awareness of themselves, but they still face the hardships of youth, the hardships of discovering they are different, and school and home climates that may not be friendly. Ensuring a book with an LGBTQ hero is on the shelf for even one lonely gay kid could be a game changer - and a life saver. I'm lucky I survived my youth, but I still carry scars from being an emotional

foreigner for the first 18 years of my life.

This bill will protect the books that make the kids who are different feel a little more like they belong. It would be a tragedy to steal them away from our Oregon kids who need them the most.

Please vote YES on SB 1583.

Respectfully,

Carla "KC" Hanson

References:

<https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/2021-01/Oregon-Snapshot-2019.pdf>

<https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2021/11/census-bureau-survey-explores-sexual-orientation-and-gender-identity.html>

<https://www.thetrevorproject.org/survey-2023/>

<https://www.opb.org/article/2022/12/26/oregon-washington-lgbtq-queer-gay-lesbian-trans-youth-children-teens-suicide-trevor-project-statistics-data/>

<https://www.them.us/story/anti-lgbtq-legislation-unsafe>