

Submitter: Darin Stewart
On Behalf Of: Parents Defending Schools and Libraries
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure: SB1583

Parents Defending Schools and Libraries is a coalition of parents from across Oregon dedicated to protecting our children's Right to Read. It is that children see themselves in the stories they read. They should also read about people who are not like them; people who live differently, look differently and think differently.

We trust that as parents we have instilled our values into our kids and don't feel threatened by the possibility of them reading something that doesn't necessarily reflect those values. We know that is how critical thinking and empathy are both developed. Two things currently in decline in our country.

We do not want our children indoctrinated. The simple presence of a book in a library is not indoctrination. Attempting to remove any book that does not align with a particular worldview, so that only a preferred viewpoint is represented, is indoctrination. SB1583 is a bulwark against such indoctrination. It will ensure that libraries remain places of diverse ideas.

Perhaps most of all, we want our right as parents to determine what our children read or don't read. SB1583 would prevent other parents from imposing their desires for their own children on our kids. It will prevent the loudest and angriest members of our community from taking away the rights of parents who want their children to explore and think.

Finally, SB1583 will allow teachers to focus on educating our kids rather than responding to endless challenges to books some parent found on a "bad books" list on the internet but hasn't actually read. It doesn't prevent a parent from requesting alternate assignments. It allows a parent to guide their own child's education without imposing their worldview on other children.

SM1583 will help ensure that all of our kids are included, represented and educated in a way that doesn't impose the beliefs, standards and values of any one group but rather enables them to discover who they are and to develop into the kind of citizen they want to become.

Please pass Senate Bill 1583