

Submitter: Katherine Bowman
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure: SB1583

Good morning.

I fully support this measure. I fully support parents supervising their children. I fully support the safety of public officials. I fully support integrity in choosing texts. I fully support protecting the time and financial resources of taxpayers and institutions. I fully support the opportunity to discuss concerns, but I stop fully supporting things when censorship efforts rise to the level of bias crimes.

That's what makes this important legislation.

In the last few months, our county had a library experience an censorship effort challenging an innocuous LGBTQ safety and health pamphlet for teens. The primary takeaway message was basically "don't let anyone do something to you you're not comfortable with.

About 100 local citizens including pastors, counselors, medical folks and regular people showed up despite an extraordinarily short timeline (there wasn't even enough time for local mail to arrive if you wanted to write a letter) to oppose the attack on the pamphlet. There was another meeting to discuss the topic (not a community meeting) and then within days the librarian's tires were sliced and a safety protocol was needed. That property damage and implicit threat retaliation raised the situation to a bias crime, which was reported at least once to DOJ in Oregon.

Frankly I'd like to see a cost recovery mechanism for challenges (perhaps a \$500 deposit), a State mediation option, a fast response task force if the situation rises to a bias crime like it did here, and a mandatory time frame so communities can completely respond to challenges, not just be railroaded.

Thanks for this bill. It matters.