

TO: Senate Committee on Education

FROM: Catherine Matthias

RE: Support for SB1583

Date: 3/6/2024

Chair Dembrow, Vice Chair Weber & and Members of the Senate Committee on Education,

I am writing to urge you to support SB1583, which will prohibit discrimination based on the race, religion, ability, country of origin, sexuality, or gender of the individuals featured in the content of educational and library materials in public elementary and secondary schools in Oregon.

I am the published author of six early reading picture books, 4 fiction and 2 non-fiction, and an adult non-fiction handbook for parents working with children struggling to read. As an author, I have a vested interest in libraries and schools having materials that are available to all. I do believe parents have the right and responsibility to decide what their children may or may not read, but no one has a right to tell me what I may choose for my child or myself.

This bill creates a statewide standard ensuring freedom of information both to users of that information, as well as providers of that information, for example librarians and educators. It also ensures people have access to accurate and representative information about their histories, communities and selves, and creates more room for understanding over prejudice in Oregon.

Thank you for taking the time to hear my story today. We hope you will vote YES to support and advance SB1583.

Thank you, Catherine Matthias, Joseph, Wallowa County, Oregon