**OUR FUTURE**
By: PARTNERS FOR SUSTAINABLE SCHOOLS

Dear Senator Dembrow and Members of the Education Committee,

We are student leaders with Our Future—Oregon's Youth Leadership Network for Climate Action and Climate Justice. Our mission is "to create a statewide, student-led network that amplifies student voices in addressing climate change and climate justice in Oregon schools, communities, and beyond." We believe in the critical nature of climate education and involvement for present and future generations, and are leading a statewide effort working with 20 schools in 11 school districts around the state. **We, the youth of Oregon, are working to take control of our future.**

Please review and consider supporting SB 421, a bill for the formation of a diverse youth advisory council that would add youth representation in the areas of racial justice and equity to the legislative process in Oregon.

As youth, it can be difficult to have a say in issues that affect our own lives. We see the problems in our society and raise our voices in support, yet all too often, we find no one there to listen. This bill lies close to our hearts, as it advocates for equity and the youth voice. It intersects with our mission as an organization, as it would create a pathway for student voices in environmental and climate justice. This bill embodies who we are as an organization.

This bill would:
- **Allow equal representation.** The council would include students from diverse backgrounds, including those in marginalized communities, those serving in other Oregon work groups, and those on other youth councils.
- **Give students voices.** A student council would allow the voices of youth within our communities to be heard. They would make recommendations to the governor and Legislative Assembly surrounding the issues that affect youth the most.
- **Improve education practices**. The youth council would help the Department of Education with content, administration, and review of surveys. When it comes to education, youth input would directly improve learning practices across Oregon.
- **Support student leadership.** This council would connect with and support student leadership organizations, allowing for a greater sense of unity across Oregon.
- **Revise methods for recording hate crimes.** Hate crimes are a serious problem, and a youth advisory council would be able to evaluate the current reporting processes used and recommend improvements. Currently, there is very

little student representation or leadership in how these issues are being addressed, even though the issues are central to students' experiences.

The undersigned Regional Leaders of the statewide Our Future student leadership network urge you to review and support Senate Bill 421. Thank you very much for your time and commitment to the people of Oregon. We look forward to seeing the progression of this bill.

Kind regards,

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| Clare O'Dell<br>Rex Putnam | Lottie Rohde,<br>Churchill High School | Maggie O'Sullivan<br>Bend Senior High School | Lily Yao, South Eugene High School |
| Melissa Miranda<br>Early College High School | Kiara Burnside,<br>Corvallis High School | Johanna Ritter West Cleveland High School | Amelia Prins,<br>South Salem High School |
| Nora Whalen<br>South Eugene High School | Marisela Basilio Alva,<br>North Salem High School | Erika Leung<br>Lincoln High School | Kamorah Lake,<br>Willamette High School |
| Charlotte Triulzi<br>Ridgeview High School | Chloe Gilmore,<br>Lincoln High School | Sam Hart<br>Early College High School | Amara Lowe, Ashland High school |
| Siri Kovi,<br>Westview High School | Cora Turner,<br>Ashland High School | Maddie Joyce<br>Caldera High School | Matea LaFrenz,<br>Caldera High School |
| Alex Wang<br>Lake Oswego High School | Avery Erdmann,<br>West Salem High School | Norah Perkins<br>Rex Putnam High School | Amy Henrikson, Lincoln High School |
| Chelsea Prasad<br>Lake Oswego High School | Elena Hagen, Corvallis High School | Jimena Villagrana Romero<br>Ridgeview High School | Safia Aweys, Cleveland High School |
| Gayatri Gadre<br>Westview High School | Helena Miller,<br>South Salem High School | John Bateman,<br>West Salem High School | Lila Wagner, Cleveland High School |
| Nima Tholiyil<br>Westview High School | | | |