

Dear Chair Dembrow and members of the Senate Committee on Education

I am Michael Allen. My wife Pat and I are elders who live just north of Florence. We ask that you vote for SB 854, the Climate Education Bill.

We are the founders of the Florence Climate Emergency campaign that has a goal of expanding climate education in our schools. I am the co-leader of the Elders Climate Action Oregon Chapter that has partnered with other statewide organizations to help realize that goal. Among them are Partners for Sustainable Schools and the student led Our Future Network. All four organizations support SB 854.

When I was a substitute teacher at Siuslaw High School, a teacher of one of the advanced science classes gave a climate change survey to his students. We were shocked to find that many of the students could not identify the three principal fossil fuels responsible for climate change.

Over the last five years I've tried to get our local school board and my legislators to add more climate education in our schools. The need is great for our youth to be prepared for a new world with all the dangers from exponential increases in wind, fires, drought, and floods.

I was unsuccessful in my attempts at the local level. But now the Oregon Educators for Climate Education have formulated a plan to introduce climate education in all the core subjects, K- 12, not just science classes as is the case now. They have patterned this after successful legislation of a similar nature that was passed in New Jersey and is now being implemented.

Please recognize the urgent need to give teachers the resources needed to integrate climate change instruction into their classrooms. It will result in a better future for our children and grandchildren.

We urge you to vote in favor of SB 854 - Comprehensive Climate Change Education in Oregon schools.

Michael and Patricia Allen

Florence Climate Emergency Campaign
Florence