Submitter: helena virga

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Education

Measure: SB854

Dear Chair Dembrow and members of the Senate Education Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on SB 854. My name is Helena Virga, and I am a graduate student, teacher, and nonprofit leader who lives in Eugene, Oregon.

I strongly support SB 854 - which aims to expand and integrate climate change instruction across all K-12 core subject areas. I am concerned about the future generations, my generation as a millennial and the ones to come, and they future they might have. We are already seeing the impacts of climate change in our region from rampant wildfire destruction to sea level rise. It is our duty to not only find solutions and create policies that will support ALL our communities, but also educate our younger generations on the real threat they face. By implementing standardized curriculum we guarantee all students are learning the same information, and can grow up to seek careers with other professionals with similar background information.

I think it is vital for all Oregon students to learn about climate change, with a focus on local impacts and connections; the best solutions come from and are implemented in local communities. We can prepare our students to be the future leaders and change makers that support their own local communities. Your oath to uphold the Oregon Constitution also means that you must act to address threats facing the state and the livelihoods of our people. It is your duty to act today, and hopefully an honor for you as well.

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

Thank you for your support of SB 854! It is time for Oregon to take leadership in becoming the second state to legislate comprehensive climate education.

Oregon's environmental policies become America's environmental policies; let's continue to be leaders for our collective futures.

Sincerely,

Helena Virga (she/her) MNM, ENVS, CRES
Eugene, OR