

Submitter: Tammy Steeves  
On Behalf Of: ELA Teacher  
Committee: Senate Committee On Education Measure: SB854

Dear Chair Dembrow and Members of the Education Committee,

My name is Tammy Steeves. I have worked as an English teacher for over 20 years. I currently serve as the Eugene School District's Secondary English Language Arts Teacher on Special Assignment ( ELA TOSA). In addition, I work closely with student teachers as their student teacher supervisor with Grand Canyon University. I also have a family, with two children who are facing many obstacles in their future due to climate change. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony for this important hearing for SB 854.

I strongly support SB 854 and believe our future depends on educating our students to be prepared to take on the hurdles associated with caring for our climate. Not only are many other teachers in support of this bill, including the Oregon Education Association, but I believe it is also the echo of many of our student voices. They want this too, which is evident in many schools across the country.

As an English teacher, my role is to teach students the skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Our content area lends itself well to incorporating any topic in order to address these skills. In my current TOSA role, I am leading our curriculum adoption which has recently been updated to support the science of reading in order to make the curriculum accessible to all of our students. The science of reading strongly relies on the building of background knowledge for students to access higher-level texts. This means that as an instructor teaches a rigorous core text that revolves around a certain topic, students will work to build more background knowledge in that topic area as a companion to reading the core text. I see this as an opportunity and a natural way to bring in topics revolving around or related to climate while continuing to address our four skill sets within the content standards.

Climate can be addressed in a variety of ways in our school curriculum. This is just one example of how moving forward with SB 854 can be easily implemented in an English classroom, producing positive outcomes for the future of our planet and all who inhabit it. I don't feel that this expectation is just another thing to add to a teacher's plate; instead, it is something that can easily flow into what is already being taught, while also preparing our future generations to find creative solutions in taking care of our planet. Let Oregon schools be the example for many other states to follow as well!

Warm Regards,

Tammy Steeves