

Dear Chair Dembrow and members of the Senate Education Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on SB 854. My name is Arnulfo Torres I am an educator for the Tigard Tualatin School District. I teach Science in Spanish and an Engineering and Design class. I was raised in eastern Oregon, and I attended Oregon State University and received a double bachelor in Biology and Education. I have been teaching for the last five years and have been a wildland firefighter for 15 years. I live in Salem, Oregon.

I strongly support SB 854 - which seeks to significantly expand and integrate climate change instruction across all K-12 core subject areas (language arts, sciences, mathematics, social studies, health, physical education, and the arts). My climate story is that I have been fighting fires since I was 18 years old, all across the United States of America, from the tundras of Alaska to the deserts of Arizona. Climate change affected me because I had to help put out fires across the US and help mediate the impacts that climate has had on our land and forest. I have seen firsthand the increase in the size of these fires across the US. I see the damage firsthand while on the front line protecting our wildland. I've seen the daily danger our wildland firefighters face and the increase in danger over the last 15 years. These Mega fires destroy environments and habitats for animals apart from human residents. I have seen the damage caused by climate change and the catalyst it has been in reference to wildland fires across the United States of America.

This bill will help students better understand the changes to our world and the possible changes we can make to improve it. Implementing this bill will help make the planet patrons leaders of the future and help our students be more conscious of the world around them.

My concern as an educator/first responder is that our students need more information to help them learn about this crisis and the human impact we have on the environment. With all the technology we have provided, our students have been disconnected from the natural world, and this bill will help bring some knowledge about the extreme impact humans have had on the earth. As a science educator, I do my best to teach about climate change, but more is needed in our schools.

Climate change will impact our students and the future to come. Let's give our students the education on climate change they deserve. 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.

Sincerely, Arnulfo Torres