

March 10, 2023

Dear Senate Committee on Education Members,

I am an elementary school teacher, school garden coordinator, and student Green Team leader in Junction City, Oregon. I am writing to request that you support Senate Bill 854, which would require statewide, K-12 climate education.

The science is clear that climate change impacts are increasing and will continue to escalate for the foreseeable future, and sadly, the youngest generations will bear the worst cost of this crisis. Therefore, it is our responsibility as educators to prepare them for the unstable world they will inherit and give them the tools they will need to create something better.

While I know firsthand that teachers have a lot on their plate in regards to teaching standards and meeting student needs, no issue is more important than preparing our young people to adapt to climate change impacts while learning to live much more sustainable lifestyles than previous generations. Their physical and mental wellbeing will depend on how well they will be able to work together to solve problems, develop regenerative localized economies, and understand the interdependence of all life on this planet. If we truly care about our kids, this should be our number one priority.

As a teacher, I am excited to create place-based, integrative learning experiences for students that will foster resilience, citizenship, and environmental literacy. By supporting Senate Bill 854, you have the opportunity to help make this much needed change in education a reality.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Britni Cacan