

## RE: HB3365/Letter of Support

“Dear Chair Neron and members of the House Education Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 3365. My name is Brenda Brainard. I am an educator, who recently retired after 30 years in the Education system. I am an Elder and member of the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians. I am a life-long Oregon resident, a basket weaver and a traditional storyteller.

I want you to know that I very strongly support HB 3365. I support the expansion and integration of climate change awareness and instruction broadly within all K-12 curriculum. This includes all subject matter areas, not just a small limitation to science. -

Climate change is not only important to our world and our future, but climate change has impacted me, directly:

- As a traditional basket weaver, I rely on natural materials (cedar, sedge, roots, seagrass) for my work. Basket weaving is not a hobby nor a financial gain for me: it is a way to stay connected to my culture and to perpetuate my culture through future basket weavers.
- Climate change has impacted these materials. I used to be able to rely on actual seasonal cycles for picking and processing materials. Now, this is impossible. Picking cycles have been reduced from weeks to mere days to access material. Additionally, material are being destroyed as a result of changing climates. Sea grass is becoming scarce, as is sedge and cedar.
- The quality of materials has also been impacted. In addition to scarcity, the materials are small/shorter, less “sturdy” and have a new “taste”. We can no longer hold materials in our mouths as we weave. Climate change has changed the way we have to weave.

Beyond the personal impacts of climate change, I have grave concerns about the future of just everything due to the climate issues and resulting impacts of climate change (water, fire, pollution).

- We have always been taught that as goes the plants and the animals, so goes the humans. We are seeing very prominent and immediate impacts of climate change on our community and our country.
- We simply cannot wait until it becomes even more of a crisis as there may not be fragile ecosystems left to save. Everything is so important in the cycle of our lives that the disruption of any part impacts every part.
- When I was young in school, climate change was not a thing: rain was constant, trees and water were plentiful and fires were a complete rarity. We did not know what was coming.
- When I taught in school, I attempted to integrate climate impacts on the topics I taught: Social Science, health, economy, environment, and new language art concepts of words and awareness.
- Both of my students had little educational instruction on climate change beyond miniscule topics in environmental science or a single report.
- I believe we need to teach, teach, teach our students about this topic (crisis). It is through education that things can happen/change. I was not given the tools to address this issue, so change is something I have to learn and work towards. By

normalizing this topic and providing tools, students and future leaders and problem solvers will have an every day awareness of this issue and options to address and resolve the crisis.

I care about HB3365 because it is a real topic that has real impacts. It seems that there are constant challenges to changing curriculum to meet the needs of a changing world. Our curriculum and educational systems must keep up with the realities of our lives and world.

Unfortunately, there are resisters to change and they seem to be able to prevent a realistic education for our students. I worked on SB13 (Tribal History/Shared History for over 30 years) and we could NEVER impact curriculum to correct the inaccuracies of Native American history in Oregon. It literally took 40 years AND a law to do the right thing. It is so sad that this legislation must occur to simply allow realistic and contemporary issues to be taught in our schools. I will never understand the resistance to authentic and accurate education.

Climate change instruction would benefit everyone and everything. Our lives are more than our human existence. We need to be aware of the wind, the water, the earth, plants and animals. In addition to the impacts of climate change, students would learn about other critters and creatures and build awareness and, perhaps, understanding and empathy. This needs to start at the lowest possible levels in school so that it becomes ordinary and impactful. And, it needs to be in all subjects so that students see/learn how all of our lives/topics are interrelated. Climate change is not just a science issues, but a global studies issue, a social sciences issue, health and even a math issue, economics and the expenses of climate change and a huge social issue of loss, displacement, growth, etc.

Sadly, Legislators must often take the lead and enforce good practices via laws. This is a perfect example of a place where law would provide uniform teaching/learning opportunities throughout our state. It is important that all students have access to a climate change curriculum, not just some districts. Legislators are in a position to be an agent for improvement and good in our state and I hope that you will be one of those legislators. This is a perfect opportunity to address a very real and progressive threat and do something to interrupt and change the threat of further destruction from climate change.

Be that person. I urge and request you to support and approve HB3365 and rally your colleagues to do the same. Be a good and progressive force for our state, our students and our education system. Comprehensive Climate Change Education is important-it is essential.

Thank you for your time reviewing this letter. I am certainly a small voice, but am shouting my pleas to you via this correspondence. Be the good leader, please.

"I urge you to vote in favor of HB 3365- Comprehensive Climate Change Education in Oregon schools."

Sincerely,  
Brenda Lee Brainard  
miluk Coos, enrolled: Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians  
30 year teacher; 4j school district