

Submitter: Laurel Burke
On Behalf Of: Laurelland and the next 7 generations
Committee: House Committee On Education
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3365

Dear members of the Oregon House Education Committee, my name is Laurel Burke, proud parent of Gabriel Burke, senior at Churchill High School in Eugene Oregon. I am writing to urge you to support House Bill 3365.

I have spent many years engaging with school age kids from a variety of education models including public, Waldorf and Montessori schools. My role as a Land Steward allowed me to interact with students on the playground in a variety of settings, while my current work as an online writing tutor has provided me an opportunity to help students find their authorial voice from Kindergarten through Master level colleges around the world. Both of these roles have provided much insight into the hearts and minds of future generations and I can assure you, they all think about how the planet will look when they become old enough to participate in policy making that affects their own children. The next seven generations will look upon us, leaders, parents, grandparents and ask "When the planet was being devastated by toxic waste and extraction projects, what did you do? How did you respond? When did you stand and say this will no longer be tolerated?" They will wonder if you wanted a legacy of poison air, land and water for them, or if you drew a line in the sand to save Mother Earth.

Scientists have been warning us for decades that our current trajectory will invariably lead to a planet that is not habitable by us or any other living creature. So far, most leaders in America have ignored these warnings or kicked the can down the road, waiting for someone else to clean up the mess. The can will inevitably be picked up by future generations who will have no choice but to address it once the crisis is out of control. Let's help them by creating a learning environment where they are free to express their anxieties about climate change. Let's provide them with the tools they need to create solutions, now! As everyone knows, the most potent tool is knowledge, one that can never be taken away and will serve as the most effective agent for change.

The planet is in peril, climate change is real, it affects all of us in one way or another. Students affected by the impacts are anxious, terrified, frustrated by leaders who dismiss their voices. They are demanding that we stop ignoring the obvious signs, that current methods of resource extraction from Mother Earth is killing all of us. It's time to listen to wisdom from the indigenous tribes of Oregon who were here long before white invasion and learned how to live in harmony with nature. It's time to start treating our planet like a home instead of an infinite cash cow to be pillaged and plundered by wealthy, powerful, people and corporations who leave behind a trash pit

for the rest of us to clean up. It's time to become true stewards and act like we are here to stay. To fulfill our duty as caretakers of a home is to fulfill our destiny as evolved beings capable of thinking beyond the next cell phone purchase or Twinkie. Please, I urge you, support HB 3365 and send a message to our youth "We care about you, the planet and the next 7 generations".

Thank you for your time and attention,
Laurel Burke