

Dear Chair Neron, Vice Chairs Dobson and McIntire, and Members of the Committee,

For the past 10,000 years, greenhouse gas levels remained relatively stable, fluctuating between 260–280 parts per million—until around 1750, when human activity triggered an unprecedented rise to today’s 420 ppm, a level not seen in at least 3 million years (NOAA, 2023).

The Oregon Climate Change Research Institute reports that Oregon's average temperature has already risen **2.2°F over the last century** and could increase by up to **5°F by 2074** (OCCRI, 2023). Research from Oregon State University projects that by 2100, the Pacific Northwest could be **2–15°F warmer**, leading to severe environmental consequences (OSU, 2024). Oregon’s **2024 wildfire season was the most expensive on record, costing over \$350 million**—a figure that could triple by mid-century (Oregon Department of Forestry, 2024).

Emily York, leader of Oregon’s Climate and Health Program, emphasizes that we still have opportunities “to blunt the onslaught” of climate change (Oregon Health Authority, 2023). Erica Fleishman, director of the Oregon Climate Change Research Institute, highlights that “knowledge of the biological, physical, and social impacts of climate change better informs society’s decisions about how to respond” (OCCRI, 2023). She is describing the power of a **climate-literate citizenry**.

If we are serious about preparing Oregonians for the challenges ahead, we must act now. **Can you think of a more effective way to build holistic climate literacy for Oregon’s 4.27 million residents than through our public schools?** Public service announcements won’t suffice. Meanwhile, only **18% of U.S. firms** have pledged to reduce emissions in line with the **global goal of limiting warming to 1.5°C**, and the federal government continues to reverse climate progress.

We **must forge our own path**. Oregon cannot afford to wait when solutions can take root in our classrooms today. The **imaginings of young students** will drive tomorrow’s climate solutions, fueling innovation and resilience. A **climate-ignorant future** is a **dangerous gamble**.

HB 3365 is a crucial opportunity—one that will help Oregon communities become self-reliant, energy-independent, food-secure, and leaders in building a thriving, sustainable future.

I urge you to vote **yes** on HB 3365.

Thank you for your leadership and thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

Darin G. Henry
Oregon Educators for Climate Education