

Submitter: Willow Scott

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SJR28

My name is Willow Scott, and I am part of the Climate Action Club at my high school. I am a senior, which means I am going to college next year. I want to study environmental science. The reason I chose that major is because whatever I do, I need it to be outside. I realized that I feel so much happier when I'm walking on grass or moss or pine needles instead of pavement. When I can see the stars. When I can touch trees that have been on earth longer than I have. When I can breathe air that tastes of rain and wind and the magic of dead leaves. When I can feel like I'm part of something much bigger than myself— something that will outlast me, outlast my children and their children. As someone who struggles with her mental health, I cannot describe the importance of the feeling of Home I get when I'm in the woods. It makes me believe that maybe life is beautiful. Maybe we will be alright.

Wild places have been disappearing from the world all too rapidly, and where they do exist, they are often changed. It's hard to get that same feeling of wonder when the ground is littered with empty beer cans and bullet casings. It doesn't feel like home when all I can smell on the wind is smog. And when the water is filled with chemical runoff and the salmon aren't coming back, it's clear that something is wrong. Even where I live in the city, believe it or not I want clean water, clean air. If life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness are inalienable rights, then let us live without the health detriments that come from breathing dirty air. Let us be happy when we see the stars at night without light pollution blocking our view. Let us hope that we might grow to an old age. Many of my generation doesn't have that hope- because if our future world is unlivable, we won't be able to live in it, will we?

But, if our future world is livable, if we ensure the safety of the salmon in the streams and old growth trees, if clean water and clean air are protected at all costs, then maybe we might have a future ahead of us.

It's up to you. Thank you.