

Submitter:

Andrew Schwartz

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

HB3365

I am writing in strong support of the proposed amendments to HB 3365, which would update Oregon's academic standards to include instruction on the causes and effects of climate change, as well as the diverse histories and contributions of communities too often left out of the classroom.

Climate change isn't going anywhere, and its impacts are intensifying faster than predicted. Our lives—and the lives of our children and their children—will be defined by an increasingly erratic, unstable climate. We have a responsibility to prepare students for the world they're inheriting. That starts with education. By ensuring students understand the science, systems, and solutions related to climate change, we give them the tools they'll need not just to cope, but to lead.

I've worked on climate issues for the past ten years. I've seen the weight that this crisis places on young people: the grief, the anxiety, the sense that they've been handed a problem no one is willing to solve. What makes that weight heavier is the silence, the dismissal, and the lack of leadership from adults in positions of power.

At the same time, the amended bill rightly centers equity. All students deserve to see their histories reflected in what they learn. Including the voices and experiences of Native, Black, Latino, Asian, Pacific Islander, Jewish, Middle Eastern, LGBTQ+, immigrant, refugee, disabled, and other historically marginalized communities is not just the right thing to do—it makes our shared understanding of the world more honest and more complete.

This bill is about preparing students for reality: for college, for careers, for democracy, for climate resilience, and for living in a diverse society. It is a step toward the kind of education Oregon can be proud of.

I urge you to pass the amended HB 3365 and show our students that we believe they deserve the truth—and the tools to shape a better future.