

## **Oregon House Committee on Education**

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

You already have letters filled with pages of statistics about how our climate is changing. But here in Oregon, we've all experienced it firsthand. As a doctor in our communities, I'd like to focus this letter on one of the many impacts of our changing climate. In recent years, wildfires have become an increasingly common and devastating part of our lives—not just for those directly involved who lose their homes or are displaced, but for our entire state and region's health.

Every time a wildfire sweeps through our region, our clinics fill with patients who can't breathe. We see a spike in respiratory issues—particularly among those with chronic conditions like COPD and asthma. While the fortunate are able to manage their symptoms with outpatient care, many end up in the hospital. These admissions often result in significant disruption to their lives, affecting their families, jobs, and overall well-being.

As a doctor, I witness the human cost of climate change in exam rooms and these are not abstract or distant problems. They are happening now, to people in our communities.

This is the lens through which I see climate health and why I believe it is crucial to foster a climate-literate population if we are to blunt the health impacts of climate change on future generations. Education and awareness are essential tools in protecting our communities' health moving forward and this starts with our kids.

For these reasons, I strongly support HB 3365 and I urge you to do the same.

Sincerely,  
Matt Kaiser, MD

Eugene, OR