

Good afternoon Chair and members of the committee, my name is Rae Blackbird. I'm a Senior at Madison High School in Portland Oregon and an Our Climate Fellow for the 2021 Legislative session, and today I'm speaking on behalf of SMJ5-1 and urging you to take bold, bipartisan climate action.

In the past six months, our state has been hit by devastating forest fires that filled the air with ash and toxic smoke, Just two weeks ago freezing snow and ice left thousands of Oregonians without power and internet access. These events show us how precarious of a situation we're in as a state, country, and planet. You've heard it before, and I'm here saying it again, we're running out of time to fight for a livable climate.

This is my last year of high school, sort of a signal to the end of a childhood and a turning of the page into adult life. And my school career has been actively shaped by the climate crisis. First in my freshman year, when the forest fires turned the sun red cancelling sports practices, then every summer since breaking heatwave records, hearing about the rising ocean waters and fearing for my grandmother living on the coast.

And that's the nature of the climate crisis, no one is left unscathed. Every constituent in every district is relying on environmental protections for their community, and that is why everyone must be part of the solution. SMJ5-1 will help Oregon live up to its name as a climate champion. I know that our government is capable of unity, and climate change is the furthest thing from a partisan issue.

Forest fires, water pollution, and breathable air don't abide by party lines, and that's why I'm asking for the committee to vote in favor of SMJ5-1 for the future of Oregon.