

Senate Committee On Education
RE: Yes on SB 854

Chair Dembrow, Vice Chair Weber, members of the Committee,

My name is Kailey James, I'm a student at Willamette University and during the summers am a resident of the City of Sweet Home in Linn County. I support SB 854 to require school districts to establish a climate change instructional program for Oregon's k-12 schooling.

I went through my K-12 schooling in various areas of Oregon, but spent the majority of my schooling in the city of Sweet Home in Linn County. I didn't receive any instruction regarding climate change throughout my thirteen years of education. There was no acknowledgement that it existed, no discussion of solutions, and no opportunity to share our voices.

Because my schooling did not give me access to instruction on climate change, I had to research on my own in order to receive any kind of information about the crisis. The issue was so large in my district that I was actively told that climate change was an 'opinion' by a highschool instructor when I wanted to publish an article on the scientific process in our school paper. This left me feeling uncertain about what could be done, and worried for what the future held.

Requiring the establishment of a climate change instructional program within k-12 schooling in Oregon would have an incredible impact on producing individuals that want to look out for other Oregonians long-term well being and health in the future. Being taught about the existence of climate change and in the importance of climate leadership would empower students to become catalysts for positive change within their communities and state.

I strongly urge you to support the development of Oregon's youth by supporting SB 854.
Thank you,

Kailey James
Willamette University Undergraduate Student