

Esteemed Oregon Senators,

I am a senior at Corvallis High School, and I am asking you to support SB 854. The role of public education is to teach students the essential skills we need in order to function in society. As I prepare to enter adulthood, I am facing a world filled with climate instability. Many of my neighbors are farmers who, in recent years, struggle through abnormally cold springs and dry autumns. Many more are climate migrants, who moved to the Willamette Valley hoping to escape the increasing natural disasters and inhospitality in other regions. Climate change is an issue affecting all of us; the skills needed to mitigate climate change are *essential* to our survival.

SB 854 will allow all students to develop these key skills. Under Section 2(f), school districts will teach students how to “meaningfully respond to the negative impacts of climate change by engaging in stewardship activities, policy-making and civic participation.” This solutions-focused approach is crucial, because it encourages us to find our voices and get involved in our communities.

Personally, I feel most overwhelmed and depressed by climate instability when my knowledge of the problem is paired with a sense of helplessness. My mental health improves dramatically when I spend time with the CHS Green Club and volunteer to help address food insecurity. But not all students know about these opportunities, and not all students can afford to put in hours of volunteer work every week. With SB 854, public school curriculum will include "the context of students' local communities", according to Section 2(i). This means *all* students will be given the resources needed to develop a sense of purpose and community in the face of climate change.

You have the opportunity to give generations of people the tools we need to empower ourselves and thrive in a changing world. Please, support us.

Support SB 854. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Raine Lohr