

Submitter: Siri Kovi
On Behalf Of: Our Future
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure: SB854

Thank you chair and members of the committee,
My name is Siri and I am a freshman student at Westview High School.
I am testifying in support of SB 854, which would require each school district to develop a written plan establishing climate change instructional programs for schools teaching grades K-12 by June 1st of 2026.

Climate education is important to me because in my youth, around my elementary and middle school years, there were very few lessons on climate change at all. Back then, we only ever heard about it either in the news, with parents, or at the beach. I remember this one time when every student was instructed to create a slide deck based on current issues or discoveries in terms of science and present it to the class. Many students spoke of historical figures, discoveries, and breakthroughs, but no one spoke of issues at all because “that’s what our parents have to worry about” they said. However, another student presented about the microplastic situation and how much of a problem it’s been. This, was SEVEN years ago when the microplastic pollution situation was already affecting the climate, AND how it was already at a humongous size. Now, 7 years later, think about how much bigger the situation has gotten. One of the prime causes of climate change. Not only that, but food waste is another contributing factor and several other factors because of the misuse and/or the mismanagement of resources. This is what got me interested in the first place. After learning and researching climate change and several factors that are widely unknown such as coral bleaching, I was very disappointed as to why we weren’t informed of or told about climate change, as a big part of history and our world today and science, why we weren’t taught about it.

This legislation will ensure that students from kindergarten through twelfth grade will automatically have a climate change curriculum aspect integrated into all public schools to further spread awareness, introduce prospective careers, and help increase exposure to learning in multiple fields of science including environmental science. I strongly urge you to please listen to the voices of youth and prioritize access to equitable climate justice education in our public schools this session and beyond. Thank you for your time and for allowing me the opportunity to submit a written testimony here today.