

Submitter: Amira Mitchell  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Education  
Measure: SB854

Hello Committee members, and thank you for the opportunity to give testimony on Senate Bill 854. My name is Amira Mitchell and I am a Junior at Westview High School. I am a leader of my school's Black Student Union, the Editor and chief of a school newspaper, a member of 2 other clubs, and I play Volleyball.

I'd like to tell you a bit of my climate story. For most of my life, I've lived in California. As a kid, anytime I would go downtown or up closer to the mountains, I would find the air thicker and more polluted, which I didn't even think much of at the time! Forest fires were a big contributor to the air quality, and I have seen many of them myself. In the fifth grade I even had to evacuate my house because of how close a fire was. When I moved to Oregon soon after, I was surprised to see little difference in the amount of fires consuming the land. For a good portion of the first years I lived here, the air was red, thick, and hard to be in. I had to stay inside often since the air quality was so bad for my asthma. Frankly, it was frightening to grow up in. Still, in these places, the air continues to be polluted and only worsens when fire season starts.

Seeing how drastically our environment is being burned down, polluted, and/or destroyed, it is detrimental that Oregon passes SB 854. Educating Oregon students on not only the Climate issues going on all around them, but also on the long term effects these events are going to have on their future. By introducing students to their planet's reality, it gives them the knowledge on how to intervene before it is too late, sparking motivation in young students to change their planet for the better. The more awareness newer generations have, the more power they have when it comes to actually making a change.

Being Lawmakers, you have the ability to give our young citizens of Oregon a head start in the fight for a healthier Climate! I urge you to recognize the importance of this bill, and how many opportunities this bill would open up to youth across Oregon. This bill has the chance to make an immense difference in our world. Please, see just how crucial this is. Thank you.

Kind regards,  
Amira Mitchell  
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