

Submitter: Lottie Rohde
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure: SB854

Dear Chair Janeen Sollman and members of the committee,

My name is Lottie Rohde, I am a senior at Churchill High School where I am the president of the Climate Action Club along with the 4j climate justice team. Outside of school, I am also the president of the 4j Climate Justice Team and a Regional Leader for Our Future, a collective of students across Oregon working on climate justice. When I am not in school or volunteering I work in childcare (infants through pre-k).

Growing up, I moved around a lot and lived in many different environments where I saw the aggressive effects of climate change. Having a conservative extended family, talking about climate change was considered “too political” and “something we shouldn’t be worrying about.” Due to this shame, I did not know what climate change was until my 6th-grade science class. After learning this, I felt inspired to learn as much as possible. This is uncommon for those who grew up in similar spaces to me, especially when surrounded by people you love who don’t think the same as you. It is hard to leap to learn more. But this is a huge reason why I am standing before you today and why we need a required climate education in schools K-12 in Oregon. Climate education needs to be accessible to those who don’t have families that talk about or believe in climate change. This issue is one that everyone needs to be made aware of, and not just the “textbook” definition, but also what we can do as a community to combat it. SB-854’s Climate Education Bill will be integrated in an age-appropriate manner in all subject areas, as someone who works in childcare, children notice the changes around them and want to know what they are. Students will not only learn the science behind climate change, but also the anthropologic aspects, and how BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and other underrepresented communities are disproportionately affected, along with the history of what Indigenous people have done for thousands of years to help the ecosystems across Oregon.

Thank you all again for considering my testimony for not only my future but the future of my children and grandchildren.