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On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure: SB854

I am a high school student who has been educated in Oregon public schools since kindergarten. Throughout the years, I have seen my peers, including myself, struggle with concern and anxiety around climate change. Many of us have to wrestle with unanswered questions about climate change and our future. When I first learned about climate change in school, I was taught about it from a very pessimistic perspective, that made me incredibly scared for the future. Later in my education, I dealt with the effects of climate change first hand when I had canceled sports practices and games because of wildfire smoke, and when my classes were cancelled due to extreme weather conditions. I also know that many young people and students are looking to pursue careers and higher education in environmental and climate science.

Introducing specific climate education into our school curriculums could be help to reduce public misinformation about climate change, calm the widespread anxiety that faces most of today's youth, and encourage more students to join the rapidly-growing field of environmental/climate science by catering to different subjects outside of STEM. Climate education won't create more work for teachers, but it will create more hope and clarity for students who have questions and anxiety around climate change. Climate education can be easily added to the curriculum, and the work involved in integrating it into our schools will have positive long-term effects on our society.