

Submitter: Willow Scott  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Education  
Measure: SB854

Chair Dembrow and Committee Members:

My name is Willow Scott, and I am a sophomore at Churchill High School in Eugene.

Climate change is one of the most important issues in our time. Sadly, many people aren't educated about it, don't care about it, or don't believe that it exists. This really needs to change. Climate change should be a factor in every decision we make, big or small. We need to make it a part of our lives now. Otherwise, it will be a part of our future; whether we like it or not, whether we believe in it or not, whether we care or not. Everybody will be affected.

School takes up quite a bit of our lives. This bill is a simple way to educate many people about climate change. A lot of the opposition testimonies state that there are more important things to be taught than climate change, and schools should focus on other things. I have two responses to that.

For one, while I understand that we do learn very important things in school, how much of it is more important than climate change? It is our future, our present, our lives, our world that is at stake. What is more important than that?

Also, climate education does not have to replace other subjects. It can be integrated into the system, so that we can learn about core classes and climate change together. It is not "this or that." We can have both.

Another common opposition statement is that schools should not be teaching students what to think about political issues. And I can agree with this. Students should be entitled to their own political opinions. The thing is, climate change shouldn't be seen as politics- it's science. School has taught me that the earth revolves around the sun, that we are made of atoms, that matter cannot be created nor destroyed. These are not seen as political issues, they are seen as facts. To the best of our knowledge, these things are true; almost all experts agree on them. Why should climate change be different? According to NASA (<https://climate.nasa.gov/faq/17/do-scientists-agree-on-climate-change/>), 97% of scientists agree that climate change is caused by humans. To the best of our knowledge, climate change is as real as atoms. Teaching about climate change in schools does not mean telling people how to vote. It means giving them the facts.

Please, pass this bill. Children have the right to know what is going on in the world around us. We have the right to a good education. We have the right not to have our homes flooded or burned, to have our future sold for a profit and some votes.

Thank you.