

Hello members of the Committee, my name is Seth Marek and I'm an advocate for Senate Bill 854. I am a sophomore at Westview High School where I am a member of the Science National Honor Society, a Science Bowl participant, as well as a member of the track and field team.

I would like to share a bit about my climate story with you all. Hailing from the muggy low-country of South Carolina and moving to the temperate greens of Oregon, I've been by coasts my entire life and have developed a common passion for the ocean. As a result, I was deeply troubled when I learned about the effects of ocean acidification for both human and marine life. From 1850 to 2022, the ocean has absorbed roughly 26% of human emitted carbon emissions. This rise of acidity due to carbon absorption has negative effects on human oceanic research, as well as marine life and food chains reaching up to ourselves. This issue is rarely discussed even amongst climate advocates here in Oregon which is disappointing considering the powerful relationships Oregon has with the Pacific coast.

By accepting Senate Bill 854, amongst many other things Oregon is establishing a precedent of oceanic care that other states refuse to establish themselves. The oceanic climate is deeply personal to the livelihoods of our state's citizens, deeper than you would expect. The climate education that would be introduced goes beyond science class. It extends to our rivers, our estuaries, our lakes. By supporting this bill you are establishing a movement that would help bring attention to the issues plaguing the great marine habitat that all citizens of the world share. As lawmakers you have the opportunity to contribute great change to our planet that many young Oregonians like me would be deeply proud of. Thank you.