

Submitter: Annelise Foster
On Behalf Of: Lake Oswego High School Green Team
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure: SB854

Dear Chair Dembrow and members of the Senate Education Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to tell you about why I support SB 854. My name is Annelise Foster and I am from the Lake Oswego High School Sustainability class and Green Team. We are passionate about finding ways to mitigate and adapt to the current climate crisis.

When there was a severe heat wave in Oregon two summers ago a few of our family's backyard chickens died from the heat, and on a drive, my dad and I stopped to rescue a baby hawk that had jumped from its nest to escape the heat. We found out that hundreds of hawks were rescued that week from Portland to Pendleton. And even more significantly, over 100 Oregon residents died during that heat wave, many of the most vulnerable being people without air conditioning and the elderly. This made me see for the first time how the things we had been warned about were now affecting my life and others.

Growing up in the Lake Oswego school system I have not had any curriculum-based mention of climate change except in middle and high school earth or environmental science classes. The climate bill would be interdisciplinary and begin in elementary school and wants to “raise our sense of connection and interdependence with the planet and ecosystems”. This is a way of thinking that we are only practicing in classes if we are fortunate enough to have electives like our new sustainability one. This way of thinking will allow us to make better decisions, be able to talk about and understand what we hear in the news about the climate crisis, and be resilient to the changes we will continue to face.

As legislators you are interested in effective planning to help our children's future and our community's health. Likely you love the beauty of Oregon and care about equity. The climate crisis is one that impacts poor and marginalized communities more, and all Oregonians deserve to have the knowledge required to face today's uncertainties. We believe that the proposed bill aligns with your values and we hope that our words today help you decide to vote for this bill.

Thank you.
Annelise Foster