

Submitter: Ava Betts
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure: SB854

My name is Ava Betts, and I am a senior at Corvallis High School. I am testifying in favor of SB 854. In my experience, Oregonian students have only been taught about the impacts of climate change. This knowledge causes significant stress amongst many students, which often evolves into apathy or helplessness towards our situation. I believe that by giving students the tools to productively manage the crisis, students will experience more hope for our future, and develop a sense of agency. Part 3(i) of the bill specifies that the education plan should “educate students on natural resource management, economics, and labor as those topics relate to climate change mitigation and adaptation within the context of students’ local communities”. By learning how to adapt to the economic impacts of climate change, students will begin to understand which job they are helpful to both mitigate the damage and achieve financial stability in a rapidly changing economy. As natural resources are lost, we will have to learn how to innovate and create new, sustainable jobs. Learning about this in the context of our local communities will help students think about what Oregonians need, and hopefully enable more projects that are both good for the economy and the environment, such as the Wheatridge renewable energy facility in Lexington. Young Oregonians deserve to have a sense of hope going forward, and SB 854 will give students the confidence and skill set to contribute to a better future for all.