



March 9, 2023

Oregon State Legislature
Senate Committee on Education
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support SB 854 - climate change instruction in public schools

Dear Chair Dembrow and members of the Senate Education Committee,

The Youth Climate Action Now (YouCAN) group in Corvallis, Oregon is a youth-led group that has been working to pass climate policy in Corvallis for the past five years. The members have ranged from 13 to 18 years old, but they have all had one thing in common: their concern about climate change, which they turned into action. They testified before the city council, mayor, climate action board, and the budget committee. They presented to many decision-makers and committees. Even though they weren't receiving much information from their school, they knew the climate emergency needed addressing, and YouCAN helped provide ways they could move their concerns into action.

Senate Bill 854, will mean that all students will have the opportunity to gain understanding of a complex and existential issue and will provide them with ways they can move their concerns into action. Under Section 2(a) it will "Educate students on how to confront the current and expected impacts of climate change from diverse decision-making perspectives." This will mean that they don't have to guess about what's really happening. They will be informed with science, not rumors or fear. It will help students find solutions, hope, and much needed information. Such as what it means to be resilient in the face of monumental challenges. Or the transformations that will be needed to create a sustainable future.

SB 854 will allow all students to develop key skills. Under Section 2(f), school districts will teach students how to "meaningfully respond to the negative impacts of climate change by engaging in stewardship activities, policy-making and civic participation." Our youth need to be given the tools to face this new world and SB 854 is an important step in that direction..

We appreciate the opportunity to give input and we strongly urge you to pass SB 854.

Sincerely,

The Youth Climate Action Now Team