

April 20, 2023

Co-Chair Lew Frederick
Co-Chair Susan McLain
Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education
900 Court St. NE, Salem, OR 97301



RE: Testimony for HB 5205

My name is Allayana Darrow, I am a resident of Medford, Oregon, and I'm the Communications Associate with Lomakatsi Restoration Project.

As a young person facing the climate crisis, the scale of what we have ahead of us can feel paralyzing. This work to restore ecosystems, in service to the land and to our communities, is not only critically necessary for our sustainability, it is healing and inspiring work. Rather than overwhelming fear and confusion, I'm driven by a fierce hope.

My hope is that communities in the wildland-urban interface across the West will become empowered with the knowledge of what's possible when we come together to heal our forests, protect the water, enhance wildlife habitat, and bring good fire back to the land, and will use those tools and best practices to create thriving, resilient communities.

As we're collectively building workforce capacity for the hands that touch the land, we're also expanding opportunities for people to work in natural resources as communications professionals like me, telling the story and engaging with partners and the public, or in human resources, operations and administration, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, technical forestry, ecology – the wide variety of specialties connected to ecosystem restoration. Whichever door we walk through, each of us is one part of a whole solution.

I'm grateful for the opportunity to support this program because I have seen it open doors for many trainees, and for Oregon communities both recovering from and facing the threat of devastating wildfire.

We respectfully urge the Committee to fully fund the HECC's Policy Option Package 301 which includes \$10 million for the Oregon Conservation Corps and \$2 million dedicated to Tribal Youth Corps funding, to build upon the impressive start and momentum of OCC. This is a wise, forward-thinking investment for both forest and community resilience and for the youth of Oregon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Allayana Darrow". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Allayana Darrow
Communications Associate
Lomakatsi Restoration Project