



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 7352

AN ACT CONCERNING MINOR REVISIONS AND ADDITIONS TO THE EDUCATION STATUTES

March 15, 2019

To: Honorable Co-Chairs Sen. McCrory and Rep. Sanchez and Distinguished Members of the Education Committee

From: Lori Brown, Connecticut League of Conservation Voters

Thank you for the opportunity to testify **IN SUPPORT OF HB 7352**, An Act Concerning Minor Revisions and Additions to the Education Statutes.

In 2015, Connecticut adopted the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), which include climate change as a core element of science education, beginning in middle-school. By including language from HB 5011 that broadens the mandate to include elementary school students, HB 7372 will ensure that our youngest students can be equipped with an understanding of what is at stake and the role they can play in preserving their planet.

Climate change must be dealt with head on if we wish to save our planet and preserve it for future generations. However, according to a survey by the Yale Program on Climate Change Communication, **only 58% of Americans believe climate change is caused by human activities.** Nearly 30% of Americans don't believe in climate change at all. This knowledge gap stands in sharp contrast to the broad scientific consensus which has called for immediate action to remedy more than a century of environmental degradation. **Climate change education can help close this knowledge gap—and equip future generations with the tools to solve complex climate issues.**

Some Connecticut towns are already demonstrating the impact climate change education can have on young children. Through the Reforest the Tropics (RTT) initiative, and after a series of classes on climate change, sixth grade students at Clark Lane Middle School in Waterford voted to plant trees in Costa Rica to offset their school's carbon dioxide emissions. Other groups of students in New London and Groton have voted to enact the same change. Overall, the RTT program has translated children's passion for environmental stewardship into 4,000 metric tons of carbon sequestration annually. **Thoughtful students like these will be front-line leaders in the fight against climate change, and we must prepare them adequately.**

Climate change education will equip future generations with the knowledge and skills they will need to tackle climate change and the associated impacts on humans and our environment. Taking this step is an investment in the future. With this in mind, I urge you to amend the language of legislation before the Education Committee **to mandate climate change education in Connecticut's statewide curriculum.**

On behalf of the Connecticut League of Conservation Voters, I urge you to **SUPPORT SB 7352**. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lori Brown".

Lori Brown
Executive Director
CTLCV

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