

My name is Sophie Tipper, and I represent Senate District 16 to the Colorado Youth Advisory Council. I'm writing this today representing myself and I urge you to vote yes on SB 25-055.

I've talked in my previous testimonies about allowing our generation to reduce our anxieties through action, about how we are ready to take the reins, and about how youth are experts in their communities. Today though I'd like to tell you about several deadlines that are approaching. According to the Paris Agreement, Carbon Emissions must have peaked by this year and then be on a steady decline of 43% by 2030. The Sustainable Development Goals set by the UN are set to be achieved by 2030, and several of them relate to environmental issues and social justice. Colorado is set to achieve a 50% reduction of greenhouse gasses by 2030 with the Colorado Energy Office Roadmap. Colorado Newline and Colorado Politics both reported in 2024 and 2023 respectively that the office was off track to meet these goals.

Before I explain why those deadlines are important I want to tell you a little more about me. I turned 17 before the last election, meaning I'm one of the unlucky ones who has to wait until they're 21 to vote in a presidential election. That election? 2028. I'll be able to vote in the midterms in 2026. At COYAC my committee has a freshman who won't even be able to vote in the 2028 election. So she'll vote in the 2030 election for midterms and her first presidential election will be in 2032.

We have 5 years left for a lot of these goals. Some climate tipping points or the point of no return where if we crossed our earth will be forever changed such as the collapse of mountain glaciers, we are possibly going to reach in less than 5 years. My generation won't even be able to vote for the policies to change these things, to push us towards a greener future. In 5 years, that freshman will vote in her first midterm election. It's too late. I'm not asking you to change the voting age, but allowing an individual aged 14-21 who might not be able to vote on our elected officials or on state propositions lets us in at a crucial time. There has never been more urgency in politics for Colorado to be a leader in the climate fight. Every day we are watching executive orders that slash environmental regulation and ultimately create a more unstable climate. Youth can do nothing but watch the representatives we did not vote for and hope that those representatives fight for our future on this planet.

Voting yes on this bill would allow a youth to speak for their community and to speak for the youth on environmental issues. If you wait until we can all vote, if you wait for others to take action: It. Will. Be. Too. Late. Our future is in the hands of people we were not able to vote for, so instead appoint a youth who understands the challenges our generation is going to have to face so we feel we at least have a chance at a habitable planet.

Youth are needed in politics now, not in 3 years, not in 5 years when we are able to vote and with that I urge you to vote yes on SB 25-055.

**House Energy & Environment**

**02/26/2025 Upon Adjournment**

**SB25-055 Youth Involvement in Environmental Justice**

**Typed Text of Testimony Submitted**

<b>Name, Position, Representing</b>	<b>Typed Text of Testimony</b>
<p>Landon Hartman  For  themselves</p>	<p>Dear Representatives,</p> <p>My name is Landon Hartman; I am a 10 year resident of this state and a Sophomore student at Colorado College; and I am a member of the Sunrise Environmental Movement. I am writing to you today about my interest in the bill for Youth Involvement in Environmental Justice that will be upcoming in the 2025 Regular Session.</p> <p>As a young person living in Colorado, I am deeply troubled by the threat that climate change poses to life and well-being in our state. Our ecological heritage, the Rocky Mountains, is threatened by wildfire, drought, and pine beetle infestation which all have degraded the natural environment on which Coloradans rely for our sense of identity and financial security. Ecotourism and outdoor recreation are among the largest industries in our state. When we lose swaths of pristine wilderness to wildfires (as seen with the 2020 Cameron Peak Fire and East Troublesome Creek Fire), when our reservoirs run dry from drought (our reliance on non-renewable groundwater is unsustainable even assuming no population growth, low levels of flow from the Colorado River could plunge the entire region of the Southwestern United States into a crisis of water shortage and climate change will only decrease our annual precipitation and increase the probability of sustained periods of drought), and when entire forests bleach gray after being consumed by swarms of insects that used to die in our cold winters (as one can see in many of our mountain passes, but especially Wolfe Creek Pass in the SW corner of our state where the few green trees that dot the slopes are an oddity among the dense-packed beetle kill), it is clear that we are losing the mountains' once-flourishing ecosystems that we have a responsibility, to ourselves and future generations, to protect.</p> <p>It is a gross injustice that our parents enjoyed Colorado's mountains and forests in their prime while we are posed to inherit a state that tips further and further in the direction of irreparable environmental degradation. A common refrain among politicians and the public at large is that the youngest generations will somehow "solve" climate change with our activism and fierce commitment to the unequivocal truth that climate change is both real and human-caused. I find this narrative to be problematic in that it places the responsibility of solving the monumental problem that is climate change on the backs of people in their young adulthood who have had little time to amass the political, economic, and social capital that they would need to accomplish substantive political reforms on any scale that would address this</p>

	<p>problem. Regardless of how dubious this notion is that our youngest generations ought to be responsible for the environmental irresponsibility of their parents and grandparents, we are willing to accept our fair share of this burden and do what we can to protect this state's natural wonders. However, if young people are to address the issue of changing climates, then we will need more than just our voices and more than just our right to vote; we will need political power and influence.</p> <p>Addressing this need is the purpose of SB25-055. This bill gives the young people who will be most strongly affected by the long-term consequences of our changing climate the political power and influence to address the problem of environmental harm brought on by climate change by creating a youth seat on the environmental justice advisory board of Colorado's department of public health and the environment.</p> <p>Give younger generations a chance to weigh in on climate change by voting yes on this bill.</p> <p>Thank you, Landon Hartman Member of Colorado College Sunrise Environmental Club</p>
<p>Mia Paulk For themselves</p>	<p>My name is Mia; I am a sophomore student at Colorado College; and I am a member of the Sunrise Environmental Movement. I am writing to you today about my support of SB25-055, the bill for Youth Involvement in Environmental Justice.</p> <p>As a young person living in Colorado, I am deeply troubled by the threat that climate change poses to life and well-being in our state. However, what can be even more concerning at times, is that the decisions of how this world will move forward are made without the voices of those who will live in it. I strongly believe that in order to best serve the people of Colorado, the youth must be represented where decisions that will impact us are made.</p> <p>By creating a youth seat on the environmental justice advisory board of Colorado's department of public health and the environment, we will step forward in building a future that secures the future of both our next generation of leaders, and the beauty of the Rocky Mountains we call home.</p> <p>Give younger generations a chance to weigh in on climate change by voting yes on SB25-055</p> <p>Thank you,</p>

	<p>Mia Paulk</p>
<p>Jeany Rush Against themselves</p>	<p>TO: Senate Committee on Health &amp; Human Services                  RE: SB25-055 Youth Involvement in Environmental Justice                  Sponsors: Winter, Marchman, Joseph, Bacon 2-26-25                  FROM: Jeany Rush, Colorado Springs Constituent                  VOTE: NO</p> <p>I object to this bill on multiple levels. First, the idea that we need our legislators, lawmakers, to create a "Justice" group for environmental issues blows my mind. In a time when we have a Climate Hoax, Green Deal Lies uncovering as we speak, and a time when our EPA has violated more rights than anyone, including ignoring the Chevron decision, I think the last thing we need is more programs, born of more misinformation, disinformation, and pure false science. This state has so many misconceptions on what is really clean for the environment, Example, CO2 is plant food, is a tiny part of our actual atmosphere, yet, you all in Colorado want to put it into Over Costly pipelines, under ground, for what? It is more dangerous hundreds of times than gas in pipelines? The whole lies about energy in this State, make any programs created on such false premises, disingenuous, and totally wasteful.</p> <p>There is nothing wrong with individual schools creating committees to work local problems for more conservation, etc. for schools. There is something wrong when a Governor gets to pick kids, and create boards and then those boards acquire other powers. With schools needing to concentrate more on education, and local communities needing to be more involved, there is no need for another board to have more authority over our schools. Nor do we need to create another piece of government boards, etc. which will add more costs to the budgets, already over by Billions of Dollars. Our state, and this legislature has not even demonstrated that it respects real academic education over mutilating our children. This is a non-starter for me. No Thanks.</p>
<p>Emma Weber</p>	<p>Dear Committee Members,</p>

<p>For Sunrise Movement Boulder Valley School District</p>	<p>My name is Emma Weber and I'm a seventeen year old student in Boulder. I'm writing on behalf of Sunrise Movement Boulder Valley School District, a network of seventy students in my school district advocating for climate justice.</p> <p>This bill is important in making sure that youth voices are heard in government. As young people, we will bare the brunt of the consequences of climate change. It is critical that our perspectives are listened to and considered. The Environmental Justice Advisory Board is an ideal place for students and youth to get involved in policy and to give their input. Our generation is full of passionate Colorado constituents, and our voices must be heard, especially on the issue of environmental justice.</p> <p>Additionally, section 2 of this bill requiring the Colorado energy office to develop and post on its website best practices for the adoption and financing of clean energy resources in schools. This is important information to be public for all Colorado schools to aid them in making the energy transition that is necessary to addressing the climate crisis.</p> <p>We urge you to vote for SB55. Thank you for your consideration of young people on this key issue.</p>
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