

THE PROBLEM

Despite overwhelming consensus from the scientific community, an alarming percentage of Americans do not believe that climate change is linked to human activities. Nearly a third of Americans do not believe in climate change at all.

Teaching students about climate change in elementary, middle, and high school can help close this knowledge gap and equip future generations with the tools to solve complex climate issues in the future.

A COMPREHENSIVE SOLUTION

In 2018, Connecticut passed Public Act 18-181, requiring the State Board of Education to encourage schools to include climate change in the Next Gen Science Standards curriculum. Unfortunately, evidence suggests many schools still fail to teach students about the climate crisis or its impacts. To address this, legislators must mandate climate change education, not simply encourage it.

Legislation was proposed in 2019 to ensure climate change education would be required as part of the school curricula (HB 7083), but failed to pass the Senate.

Lawmakers also need to update the statewide curricula in language arts, science, mathematics, social studies, and civics to equip our students from kindergarten through 12th grade with the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and awareness to confront and neutralize the existential threat that the climate crisis poses.

Most importantly, our children have to embrace the civic responsibilities associated with the climate crisis, taking systematic action on both micro and macro solutions to the problem: adaptation, greenhouse gas reduction, energy efficiency, carbon sequestration, and environmental education.

Lawmakers should pass this important climate change education legislation so our students will be prepared to tackle climate related issues in the years to come.



FAST FACTS:

- Only **58%** of Americans believe climate change is caused by human activities, according to a study by the Yale Program on Climate Change Communication.
- About **30%** of Americans do not believe in climate change at all, according to the same study.
- In March 2019, the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change said the world greenhouse gas emissions must be cut dramatically by 2030 to avert catastrophic climate change.

CONTACT

For more information, contact:

Hugh Birdsall, Reforest The Tropics

hdbirdsall@aol.com | reforestthetropics.org

Sena Wazer, Sunrise Movement Connecticut

sunriseconnecticut@gmail.com | 860-931-9346