

Sen. Jefferey Merkley
District: OS1
United States Senate
B-40B Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Subject: Save Our Broken Schools

Dear Sen. Merkley:

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. I am asking you to help us with furthering our campaign for funds for our new school initiative. As a senator, you have credibility and the power to make things happen, which is why we hope that you will join our cause.

A tsunami would completely destroy our small coastal town, killing and injuring many. A recent study conducted by the Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries (DOGAMI) says that along the Oregon coast, earthquakes large enough to trigger a tsunami occur every 300 to 500 years. The last earthquake that destructive was 309 years ago, which means that the chances of one happening soon are too high to be considered safe.

We are completely unprepared. The study also said that four out of five schools in the Seaside School District aren't in a tsunami safe zone. If the tsunami strikes during school hours, it will destroy our schools and many young lives. There is no way that we can ensure safety for all students and staff with the current location of the school campuses.

The study said that the waves would be between 20 and 65 feet high, but might even be up to 100 feet high. The evacuation site for Gearhart Elementary is only at a 40 feet elevation, which would mean that all of the students and the faculty would most likely be killed. Broadway Middle School and Cannon Beach Elementary rely on bridges to escape, which would not be stable during the earthquake preceding the tidal wave. Seaside High School would either hide in the upper-story gym or drive over crowded roads to a safe zone. Even Seaside Heights Elementary, the only school that the study deemed safe, would not be completely protected from an especially tall wave.

It is imperative that we ensure our students' safety, and the only way that we can do that is to relocate. We want to have a large campus to house all of the students in the Seaside School District, which would be located in a tsunami safe zone behind Seaside Heights Elementary. Our school board is going to propose a bond measure to pay for this. This means that Seaside is going to vote on whether property taxes should be raised or not to pay for a new school campus. It would be a bad idea to raise taxes while the economy is in such bad shape, especially when our local tourist industry is getting less and less money. This measure would probably not pass and continue to put us in danger.

The best way to deal with this impending danger is to request funds from our new president, Mr. Barack Obama for a new, safe, up-to-date, and eco-friendly school. He has promised to fix our broken schools, and we want him to before disaster strikes.

We just need your support now.

Sincerely,

Rain
Student