

**Statement of Debra Hersrud**  
**Bicameral Task Force of Climate Change Forum**  
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My name is Debra Hersrud and I am a 17-year old high school senior from Shishmaref.

I've thought a lot about climate change and it scares me. One day Shishmaref won't be here. This is where I grew up and this is where my grandparents grew up. I hope to come back to Shishmaref after college, but I don't know if it will be here.

The changing climate affects my daily life. I just got a snowmobile and we used to ride out and play on the sea – it's getting more difficult because the land is narrower. And it can be scary because I need to make sure the ice is thick enough to be safe.

We've been talking about climate change at school – my teacher has told us a lot of stories about when she was young. She says the land was 15 feet higher when she was our age.

We lived away from Shishmaref for several years. One thing I used to like to do when I was younger was go looking for eggs near the lagoon. When I moved back, I was surprised to see all that land was just gone.

I remember one afternoon, the year we first moved away, my mom came to get me from my grandparents house. As a result of a storm, the back of our house and our back stairs were dangling over the cliff in the ocean. It was scary. We had to immediately move all of our things out of the house and we went to go stay with my grandparents.

Shishmaref is changing faster than I can grow up. And climate change is a problem that has been around longer than I have. It seems unfair to be giving up my home and my culture for a problem that I don't have the power to solve by myself. But that is why I'm here, and why we are asking for your help – to address the issue of climate change at a national level.

Thank you for having me here today.