



## **SB 802 and HB 2948: Voter Pre-Registration for 16 Year-Olds**

*Allows eligible person who is at least 16 years of age to register to vote.*

### Background:

In 2007, the Oregon Legislature voted nearly unanimously to allow 17 year-olds to pre-register to vote. Since then, thousands of 17 year-olds have successfully pre-registered in high school classrooms and at the DMV. But that policy left many youth behind. Approximately 20,000 16-year-olds get their driver's licenses at the DMV every year. This bill would allow them all to pre-register to vote in the same trip.

### How this bill helps:

- Research shows that voter registration and voter participation and turnout are closely correlated.<sup>1</sup>
- Voter registration is the single biggest barrier to voting.
- A significant majority of youth ages 18-29 register at the DMV nationwide. In Oregon, 16 year-olds are being excluded. This bill would capture the 20,000 16-year-olds who visit the DMV every year to apply for their driver's licenses.
- Improves voter engagement of 18-to-21-year-old voters in Oregon.
- This bill would likely have the most significant impact on young rural voters who are even more likely to need to get a driver's license when they turn 16 - and less likely to be registered in an election cycle voter registration drive, since those efforts typically focus on more densely populated parts of the state.
- Pre-registration is low cost, easy to implement and saves money
  - Maricopa County, Arizona found it costs only 3 cents to collect and process a registration electronically, as opposed to 83 cents per paper form.
  - Pre-registration youth would most likely to register through motor vehicle offices or online which would reduce voter registration errors and save on paper form processing.

### The Details:

- Information will be kept private and not be made available to the public as part of the voter rolls until the individual is 18 and eligible to vote.

### Other States:

- Ten states and the District of Columbia already allow pre-registration for 16 year-olds. Several of those states - including Louisiana, Utah, and Florida - passed bills with bipartisan support, with Republican-controlled chambers, and with Republican Governors.

Supporters: The Bus Project, Common Cause, Oregon League of Conservation Voters, The Oregon Working Families Party, Unite Oregon, PCUN, Causa, AFSCME, Oregon Education Association, Planned Parenthood Advocates of Oregon, Latino Network, SEIU Local 503, SEIU Local 49, Oregon Environmental Council, Family Forward Oregon, Oregon Nurses Association, OPAL Environmental Justice, ACLU of Oregon, AFT Oregon, Oregon Student Association, Northwest Health Foundation, Oregon League of Women Voters, The NAACP Portland Branch and APANO.

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<sup>1</sup> "Voter Registration Among Young People," The Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning & Engagement.