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Grace Meng
Congress of the United States
Sixth District, New York

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**Statement by Congresswoman Grace Meng (NY-6) in
Support of SB 776**

Young people throughout this country are leading the fight against so many issues from gun safety to climate change. Young adults are legally permitted to work and pay federal income tax on their earnings. They are legally permitted to drive motor vehicles, and if they commit crimes, they are tried as adults. If 16-year-olds are impacted by our laws, it is only fair their voices are heard by policymakers. Research has shown that voting is habitual, and age 16 is a better time to begin cultivating that habit.

16- and 17-year-olds have a vested interest in the policy decisions of today, because young adults will be responsible for solving the problems of tomorrow. That is why, in Congress, I have championed for years, a Constitutional Amendment to lower the voting age to 16-years-old for all elections. I support Senate Bill 776 which would allow registered 16-and 17- year-olds to cast a ballot in school district elections. I applaud the advocates and legislature for recognizing the importance of youth voting rights.

I have no doubt that empowering young adults to shape our policies will strengthen the State of Oregon and our entire nation. After all, youth activism has profoundly impacted cultural and political movements throughout our country's history. They deserve to have a seat at the table and a voice at the ballot box.