



Catie Macauley
Senate Committee on Rules
RE: Support SB 776

March 11th, 2021

Chair Wagner, Vice-Chair Girod, and Members of the Senate Committee on Rules,

My name is Catie Macauley, I live in Multnomah County, and I'm an activist for mental health equity, climate justice, and voter enfranchisement. Today, I'm here specifically supporting SB 776 which will allow 16 and 17 year olds to participate in school district elections.

I've been involved in the fight to lower the voting age for over two years, but this issue has never been as pressing as it is today. As teenagers navigate the COVID 19 pandemic, we're expected to continue with school, college applications, jobs, and our daily lives as normal. This takes an astronomical amount of strength and organization. Not only can 16 year olds work like adults, drive like adults, and be tried like adults, but we are expected to function at adult capacity in a truly unprecedented era. **We are tasked with adult responsibilities, without being afforded adult privileges.**

This injustice is even more glaring in school board elections than general elections, because the people impacted by school board decisions are the very people who don't have any say in those decisions: students. We are the only ones who know what it is like to attend school virtually every day, who experience the repercussions of decisions for our teachers and administrators, and who see the efficacy of racial equity policies implemented in schools. We deserve to have a legitimate voice to validate our legitimate stake in our education.

If you care about the youth, care enough to take brave and progressive action and truly listen to our voices, I urge you: please support SB 776.

Sincerely,
Catie Macauley