



Hannah Bowes  
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 Hannah Bowes and I live in Multnomah County. I am a student and also part of the UPTURN leadership program at Next Up Action Fund. I am a supporter of SB 776, which allows 16 and 17 year olds to participate in school board elections.

SB 776 is important because it can help Portland students develop our political voices from a younger age, beginning with elections that affect us directly. We deserve a voice in choosing people who we believe will create the change needed in schools. Passing SB 776 would give me and my peers a better understanding of how to participate in elections while we are still in high school. I've been learning about voting and civic engagement throughout my education, but I am only able to listen to other people's experiences and lessons given by teachers. I have no personal experience in the process. Letting students participate and advocate for what we believe our communities will benefit from will give us the real-life experience to build our confidence in the voting process, increasing our likelihood to participate in other elections as adults.

Letting 16 and 17 year olds vote in school board elections will help us develop our political voices, gain personal experience with voting, and increase voter turnout in future elections. Please pass SB 776.

Sincerely,  
Hannah Bowes