

Danica Leung  
House Committee on Education  
Re: Support SB 702 B

May 20, 2021

Chair Alonso Leon, Vice-Chairs Neron and Weber, and members of the committee,

For the record, my name is Danica Leung and I am a Next Up Action Fund supporter who resides in Portland, Oregon in Multnomah County. I am a seventeen year old high schooler testifying today to extend my firm support for SB 702 B.

I come from a community which has historically been boxed out from government and politics, and that bamboo ceiling has created stigma and logistical barriers for me from engaging in my community. However, that all changed when I took my school's Constitution Team class my sophomore year. Constitution Team was a one year social studies class in which we took a deep dive into our federal constitution, how our government functions, and modern day social movements. It is because of this uniquely thorough civics curriculum that I was intrigued and empowered on how to become active in community issues and social movements, and ultimately led to my involvement in efforts for youth voter registration, lowering the voting age, and more. My experience informs me that understanding these crucial civics lessons is the first step towards cultivating youth empowerment. Especially in a time of social and political turmoil, schools and classrooms must be the medium to do so in order to combat misinformation and political propaganda. SB 702 B will not only allow for an in depth discussion and review around civics education, but it will bring in stakeholders like a student, teachers, and community organizations into the process. This will help better ensure that social studies standards are addressing all the areas that students need to receive a comprehensive, equitable and meaningful civics education.

Everyone here will likely agree that youth are our future. But in order for that future to be a good one, we must invest in the youth in the present. If we want powerful, young leaders in government, we must educate them on civics in schools. If we want proactive, empowered youth to shape our community, we must let students shape their classrooms. Therefore, committee members, I urge you to pass SB 702 B.

Sincerely,  
Danica Leung