

Submitter: Karina Rasum
On Behalf Of: NAACP
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure: HJR20

As a leader of the civil rights movement, I know firsthand the importance of fighting for the rights of all individuals, especially those who have historically been marginalized and disenfranchised.

Lowering the voting age to 16 is a powerful step towards ensuring that our young people have a say in the decisions that affect their lives. We often hear that young people are the future, but they are also present. They are deeply affected by issues such as education, healthcare, and the environment, and they deserve a voice in shaping policies related to these critical areas.

When we deny young people the right to vote, we perpetuate an injustice that threatens the very fabric of our democracy. We must strive to create a society where everyone's voice is heard and valued, regardless of age.

I am heartened to see that HJR 20 recognizes the importance of civic engagement among our youth. By lowering the voting age to 16, we are sending a powerful message that young people have a role to play in shaping the future of our state and our nation. We are empowering them to become active participants in the democratic process, and we are setting an example for other states to follow.

I am nearly 84 years old and have dedicated my life to advocating for the civil rights of fellow Black Americans. As I look toward the future, I remain hopeful that these hard-won rights will continue to extend to future generations, including my great-grandchildren.

It's time to stand with our young people in the fight for justice and equality. We need to work together to create a society where all voices are heard and all individuals are treated with dignity and respect.