

Submitter: Keirin Stelter-Burwell  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Rules  
Measure: HJR20

I am proud to offer my testimony of support for HJR 20, a constitutional amendment to lower the voting age to 16 in Oregon elections.

Firstly, we have young people in Oregon who work and pay taxes but don't have a say in their future. By lowering the voting age to 16, we can ensure that their voice is heard and they have a say in the decisions that affect their lives. It is only fair that those who contribute to society and its economy have a voice in shaping their future. Secondly, this bill would give our young people the opportunity to address major issues such as climate change and LGBTQ+ rights. These are critical issues that will impact future generations, and it is essential that we provide our young people with the opportunity to have a say in these decisions. Thirdly, elected officials are making decisions for young people without their input. By lowering the voting age to 16, we can ensure that young people have a seat at the table and can actively participate in the decision-making process. If young people can pay taxes, they should have the right to vote. This is a basic tenet of democracy. Additionally, young people in Oregon can do more than just pay taxes. And they also have the ability to educate themselves, gather information, and make informed decisions. While they may need guidance, young people have proven time and time again that they can make intelligent decisions and contribute to society. History has shown that when the voting age was lowered to 18, young people became life-long voters. Contrary to what some may believe, young people, are capable of making responsible decisions and actively engaging in the political process. They are capable of self-educating and debating important issues.