

Submitter: James Olson
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure: HJR20

I want to respond to Diana Velasquez's testimony for the committee.

First of all, I want to thank her for sharing her personal experience as a parent. However, I must say that her daughter and her friends are not representative of all 16 and 17-year-olds in Oregon. Many of them are well-informed and politically engaged, and denying them the right to vote based on the assumption that they are all immature is simply unfair and unfounded. Age should not be the only criterion for determining someone's eligibility to vote. If we follow her logic, we should also deny the elderly the right to vote because they may suffer from cognitive decline. But we both know that would be discriminatory and wrong. Finally, let's not forget that 16 and 17-year-olds are already allowed to work, pay taxes, and even join the military. So why should they be denied the right to have a say in the decisions that affect their lives and their future?