

Submitter: Cassie Wilson
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure: HB3206

Dear Chair Fahey and members of the committee,

My name is Cassie Wilson, I'm a resident of Boring and I'm 24 years old. I'm here today in support of HB 3206 to lower the voting age to 16 for school district elections.

Much of my K-12 experience as a Gresham-Barlow student was characterized by conversations about accessibility. The Americans with Disabilities Act passed in 1990, but a majority of schools were built before then. Having been born only 8 years after its passage, unfortunately schools I attended had a lot of catching up to do when it came to accessibility.

In kindergarten, 6th grade, and freshman year, my mom and I would sit down with the district and explain what needed to change. At East Orient, power doors were added. At West Orient, an elevator was added to the over 100 year old main building, plus power doors, plus shelter over outdoor accessible pathways. At Barlow, a few power doors and some doorway ramps were added. This accessibility advocacy was a lot to ask of a kid when I should have just been worrying about upcoming tests, but it wasn't the only thing.

Accessibility was just a drop in the bucket of a student experience defined by paper shortages, overcrowded classrooms with a desk shortage that relied on someone being absent, outdated textbooks that were literally there when my mom attended the same schools over 30 years prior, and wondering where I would hide in the event of a lockdown.

Students are directly impacted by politics. People of all ages are affected by politics. It would've been so impactful to me if I could have voted for school board members who recognized these problems and wanted to take the burden off students needing to address them. To be able to vote for who made crucial decisions about the places where I spent a majority of my time would've been empowering at a time when I felt like I had no control over my circumstances.

Join me in supporting HB 3206 and giving students a voice and a choice.

Thank you.