



February 21, 2023

To: House Committee on Rules

From: Oregon Education Association

Re: Support for HB 3206

Dear Chair Fahey and members of the committee---

The Oregon Education Association represents over 41,000 educators and education service professionals across the state, from pre-k to community colleges. Our members are classroom teachers, bus drivers, custodians, teacher assistants, nutrition specialists, school counselors, community college professionals and more.

We would like to express our enthusiastic support for HB 3206, which would allow 16 and 17 year old Oregon citizens to cast a vote in all school district elections. And we thank the bill sponsors for putting this concept forward for consideration.

The OEA sees this as a critical next step for truly ensuring our school board candidates and elections are serving those most impacted by the decisions of these bodies. School Districts and school boards across the state make decisions every single day that directly impact their students, and although we all would like to think we are acting in the best interest of our students, we should always look for opportunities to embed their participation and voices in the process.

We ask young people to represent their peers at school board meetings, participate in student councils and to speak out and use the proper channels to engage in change. This begs the question about why we have set up a voting electorate that has not built in student voices in the choices we make for school boards and school district elections.

Let's show the next generation how much we believe in their abilities, their voices and our shared future. We urge your support of HB 3206.

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