

RE: Support for Our Future, Our Vote - HJR 20
House Committee on Rules

February 23, 2023

Chair Fahey, Vice-Chairs Breese-Iverson and Kropf, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Iyanna Akena and I live in Portland. I am writing to testify in strong support of HJR 20, which will lower the voting age from 18 years old to 16.

We know civic habits are more likely to stick when developed at a younger age. Research suggests that allowing 16 and 17-year-olds to vote can improve voter turnout, spur civic engagement, and encourage effective civics education.

I'm in support of this legislation because youth deserve to voice their political views. At these ages they are making life changing decisions for their futures, and some even have to deal with adult responsibilities on top of the societal obligations we place on them. They should have the right to share their unique perspective on policies voted in place that inevitably affect them.

Please pass HJR 20 out of the committee.

Thank you,

Iyanna Akena