

RE: Support for HB 3206
House Committee on Rules

February 22, 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 HB 3206, which will allow 16 and 17-year-olds to vote in school district elections.

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 share their voice within school districts, as they are the main ones impacted by policies decided in those elections. Youth have unique and innovative ideas and that deserves to be reflected within their schools. Youth being able to vote while still in high school can help impact schooling for future generations, as this can open the door for more student-centered policy changes.

Please pass HB 3206 out of the committee.

Thank you,

Iyanna Akena