

Submitter: Tracy Phipps
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure: HJR20

As a person who works with high school students, I can attest that 16 year olds should not be allowed to vote. They are not mature enough to make long term decisions. We call them minors and deal with them differently for good reason. If they are not treated as adults by the law then they should not have a say in the law. Teenagers under 18 do not have enough life experience to truly understand the impact that some of the measures on the ballot or policies candidates run on can have. Most teens under 18 have never had a job or are just getting their first part-time job. In addition, very few of them have any true responsibility, especially financial. They have very little understanding of what it is like to be self-supporting member of society.

I was shocked when I recently taught a class to 16 and 17 year olds that covered topics like insurance, banking, credit and taxes at an introductory level. Most knew almost nothing about any of it and many did not have any interest in learning. That was a little shocking given that some of them would be graduating later that year. Along with too little life experience. Teens under 18 have not developed enough mentally to take on this responsibility. For the same reason that Oregon changed the tobacco laws to 21, we should not lower the voting age. Teenagers have not cognitively developed enough to make decisions that have societal, long term consequences.

This is a serious matter and the people of Oregon, who can legally vote right now, do not support lowering the voting age. You are supposed to represent the people. Please do so by voting no on lowering the voting age.