

RE: Support for HB 3206  
House Committee on Rules

**Feb. 23. 23**

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

My name is Charlie DuCharme and I live in Portland, Oregon. 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.

In my sophomore year of high school, I took part in an statewide conference and education program called, Know Your Government that provided civic education on the legislative system, judicial system, elections and party platforms and politics and the media. This conference brought together many young people across the state, encouraging them to explore innovative ideas and perspectives. Unfortunately, though the conference was a great opportunity to learn, it was frustrating to not have the opportunity to be politically engaged.

As a recent BSW graduate, I am still learning a lot about our political systems but am excited to support HB 3206, lowering the voting age to 16. It encourages the foundational life-long “habit” of political engagement, allows for more innovative ideas from the most impacted community, and ensures all voices are represented in our government.

Please pass HB 3206 out of the committee.

Thank you,

Charlie DuCharme