

RE: Support HB 3012
House Committee on Rules

2/11/25

Chair Bowman, Vice Chair Drazan, Vice Chair Pham and members of the House Committee on Rules,

My name is Alma Robinson, and I live in Portland, Oregon. I am writing to testify in strong support of the Student Voice and Democracy Act, HB 3012, which will allow registered 16- and 17-year-olds to vote in local school board elections, giving students a voice in their education and strengthening our democracy.

We have an opportunity to strengthen our democracy by giving students a voice in the decisions that directly impact their education. Students care deeply about their education yet don't have a say in ensuring school boards are responsive to the needs of all students. The Student Voice and Democracy Act will amplify the voices of thousands of students and keep decision-makers accountable.

I've never brushed past civic engagement lightly, in fact - it is something I'm very passionate about and has been fueled by the many experiences that come with attending a public school within Portland. Because of the lower funding within Parkrose School District in particular, our needs are not nearly as met when put into perspective with our Oregon school district counterparts. Sports, clubs, and passions - that allow each student to get up in the morning and pursue a topic of interest they love; may not be feasible due to the circumstances we have continuously been put under.

It is clear that we as a community of scholars are overlooked, and that we can not solely rely on adults and their values when our education is at stake. Naturally, my peers and I now demand our need for a better education, with access to increased resources through funding that could only be brought about using the voices of the students who yearn for the same opportunities as those around us.

So please - vote yes on HB 3012,, and allow this community of young people to step out of these discriminatory shadows and finally be represented.

Thank you,

Alma Robinson

