

RE: Support HB 3012
House Committee on Rules

02/10/2025

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

My name is Marjorie Lyn Dela Cruz, and I live in Hillsboro, OR. 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.

As a student, I didn't have accessible outlets to talk about what I cared about and felt I was viewed with naivety when I did attempt to speak out about things that I thought were wrong with my community. I never felt listened to. As if, my voice did not matter. I voted for the first time this past year and I know many of my peers didn't see a point in voting due to not seeing change in their communities. Many young people feel that the government is so far out of reach when the government should be reflective of everyone's beliefs.

I hope that through The Student Voice and Democracy Act students will be allowed to speak about what they believe and have the opportunity to see change in institutions that directly impact them. Please vote yes on this bill.

Thank you,

Marjorie Dela Cruz