

Submitter: Samantha Klimek  
Committee: House Committee On Rules  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: Support HB 3012

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

My name is Samantha Klimek, 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 critical voice in their education thereby strengthening our democracy.

I have the privilege of being a high school US Government teacher in the North Clackamas School District. The importance of civic engagement is something that I try to stress to my students daily. Providing young people with an opportunity like the one afforded by the passage of this bill would help demonstrate the importance of engagement and would lead to a more civically engaged population which is essential in a healthy democracy.

Our students care about their education. They are the people most impacted by the decisions school boards make and should therefore have a voice in deciding who is making those decisions. Providing some ownership over their education will deepen their interest and involvement to their schools and communities. Engaged students do better both academically and socially. The passage of this bill will help build a more civically engaged citizenry as well as a more engaged student body.

I urge you to pass the Student Voice and Democracy Act out of committee. It is a benefit for our schools, our students and our democracy.

Thank you,  
Samantha Klimek.