

Submitter: Mark Adamski
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 Mark Adamski, and I live in Portland. 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.

Permitting 16 and 17-year-olds to vote in school elections would give students a meaningful way to apply their civic education directly to their communities. Oregon high school students are now required to earn 0.5 civics course credit to fulfill graduation requirements, and teachers must “identify the requirements and process for voting.” Students are ready to vote. A lower voting age would make civics education more effective by providing students with a way to directly apply what they’re earning in the classroom to their communities would add a crucial level of relevance to civics courses. Research shows that 16 and 17-year-olds have the same civic education, political skills, and interests as their 18-year-old classmates who can vote.

Please pass the Student Voice and Democracy Act out of committee.

Thank you,
Mark Adamski