

February 28, 2025

TO: House Committee on Rules
FROM: Chloe Acosta, Our Children Oregon
SUBJECT: Support for HB 3012

Chair Bowman, Vice-Chairs Drazan and Pham, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of HB 3012. My name is Chloe Acosta and I am a Policy and Advocacy Intern for Our Children Oregon (OCO), a statewide organization that advances equitable policies, data and research, and whole-child advocacy.

HB 3012, The Student Voice and Democracy Act, is included in the 2025 Children's Agenda. I am here to represent not only my own personal support of HB 3012, but also the support of Our Children Oregon.

Students deserve to have a voice, especially when the decisions made will directly impact themselves and their peers. I wish I would have been given this opportunity in high school. As a very active high school student, I never felt like my voice truly mattered. My classmates and I would share our concerns and experiences at school and they were dismissed like they did not exist. This would have given me the opportunity to use my voice in a meaningful way. It is important we hold decision makers accountable.

At 16 years old, you can make your own medical decisions, obtain a driver's license, work a job, and pay taxes. As the primary recipients of the services

provided by the school - student experiences, needs, and concerns should inform district policy and the priorities of school board members.

At Our Children Oregon, we strongly believe all students deserve equitable access to an education. People of color, disabled, and LGBTQ+ students face harassment and bias at disproportionate rates. The school board members are critical decision-makers who ensure equitable access to their education, resources, and student support, such as clubs and books.

Our Children Oregon urges you to support The Student Voice and Democracy Act and vote yes on HB 3012.

Thank you,

Chloe Acosta, Policy and Advocacy Intern, Our Children Oregon

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