

Submitter: Angelina Procopio
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 Angelina, 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.

Our communities stand to gain only positives from the passage of this bill. It would give students a highly motivating sense of agency and a vested interest in staying engaged and educated about policies that affect them. It would also give students firsthand experience participating in a democratic voting process, while limiting the scope to decisions that directly impact their education. The current system serves only to enforce a meaningless disparity between 18-year-old students and their 16- and 17-year-old classmates, who are equally capable of understanding decisions they are subject to and yet have no autonomy whatsoever to influence outcomes. Just as our society has recognized that 16- and 17-year-olds are capable of driving or being employed, it's time for us to recognize that they are capable and deserving of having a voice when it comes to their own education.

Thank you,

Angelina Procopio