

Submitter: Saahas Koganti
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3012

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

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify in support of HB3012, the Student Voice and Democracy Act. My name is Saahas Koganti, and I am honored to serve as a Student Representative on the Beaverton School District School Board—Oregon's third largest School District serving over 38,000 students.

In my role, I have seen how student perspectives can shape meaningful policy and create tangible impact. When Beaverton School District created student representative positions on our School Board, it confirmed the district's commitment to including those most affected by its decisions—students themselves. Prior to serving on the Board, I chaired the Superintendent's Student Advisory Committee, where I saw how direct engagement with student concerns districtwide sparked vital changes in curriculum and student wellbeing.

The Student Voice and Democracy Act takes this one step further by allowing registered 16- and 17-year-olds to vote in local school board elections. Far too often, the very people living with the outcomes of policy—our student population—are left without a formal voice in who leads our schools. By extending voting rights to these young individuals, we can ensure that decisions about curriculum, budgets, and school climate fully consider our experiences and aspirations.

Oregon is already known for expanding democratic participation, and HB 3012 continues that legacy of civic innovation. Students who feel heard and empowered are more likely to become engaged community members. By engaging younger voters now, we cultivate a habit of informed participation that will strengthen our democracy for years to come.

I respectfully urge your support for HB3012—the Student Voice and Democracy Act.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

Best Regards,
Saahas Koganti