

Written Testimony - HB 3012

Maya Rivera
Portland, OR
House Committee On Rules
Support HB 3012

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

My name is Maya Rivera, 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.

In voting, the student body is what is directly affected by policy changes, alongside all other moving parts of the institution. As a current High School student nearing her last year in our Oregon public education system, I have worked personally in the school board decisions. This puts me as not only a constituent of this policy, but a fellow educator and student. My voice has always been a core weapon in voicing what I believe is most suitable for the liberation of those I teach and interact with every day. The restriction of the strongest mechanism a student has, their voice will result in harm to all parties.

Without an ability for 16- and 17-year-olds to vote in school board elections, the critical role in voicing opinions through the everyday experiences of young people will be stifled. This is why I urge you to vote YES on HB 3012, the Student Voice and Democracy Act passed out of committee. This is not only about gaining freedom and democracy for students, but continuing our precedent of activism, expression, and liberation for all Oregon students. Thank you for your time.

Best regards,
Maya Rivera