



*The League of Women Voters of Oregon, established in 1920, is a grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.*

February 18, 2026

To: [\*\*Senator Kayse Jama\*\*](#), Chair, [\*\*Senator Bruce Starr\*\*](#), Vice Chair Senate Rules Committee

And Members of the [\*\*Senate Rules Committee\*\*](#)

Re: [\*\*SB 1574 – First Time Voters Act – Support\*\*](#)

As a 16-year-old member of the League of Women Voters of Oregon Youth Council, I support SB 1574 which would permit 17-year-olds who will be 18 by the date of the consecutive general election to participate in primary elections. The League believes that elections should be conducted in a manner that encourages voter participation.

I support this legislation because [more than a third of U.S. states have already enacted this election policy](#). I feel I will have more incentive to vote regularly, at many levels, if my civic voice is respected. This is a movement for civic change already approved in some states and an understanding that young people have a right to civic participation. Currently, 21 U.S. states plus the District of Columbia allow 17-year-olds who are 18 by the date of the consecutive general election to participate in primary elections, but Oregon does not.

Young people may feel like their voice is better heard with SB 1574 because it respects their rights to vote in a more comprehensive way, allowing them the ability to vote the same as when the general election comes up. This promotes voter equality and representation as well as serving as a way to encourage younger demographics to vote.

Statistics have backed this idea; Illinois implemented similar legislation in 2014 and saw that the midterm turnout of 17-year-olds exceeded the midterm turnout among 20-to-40-year-olds by 15 percent. These 19 U.S. states saw these facts and decided to make a change, and I believe Oregon should join them in this crusade for better younger demographic voter respect and turnout.

We urge your Support for SB 1574.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.

Barbara Klein  
Acting President LWVOR

Becky Gladstone  
Governance Coordinator

Olivia Han  
Youth Voter Strategist