

Uma Ilavarasan
Beaverton, Oregon

February 11, 2015

Ways and Means Subcommittee on General Government:

Good afternoon, my name is Uma Ilavarasan and I am here today to testify in support of House Bill 2177. I am from Washington County and am a senior at Westview High School. I have gotten permission from school to be here today because I believe that this bill will help to better engage and create a responsible youth electorate.

As a teenager who strives to integrate high school voices into political discourse, I know that the complicated voter registration process can pose a significant obstacle to the establishment of a solid foundation for both present and future civic engagement.

Through my leadership role in Junior Statesman of America I strive to integrate the youth perspective into political discourse. I believe that we can better engage youth through conversation and education on the importance of voting instead of spending the majority of our time registering people. I want that time to be spent better.

I am also here because I am at the point in my life where my peers are getting their drivers license or personal IDs. I believe that if my peers are eligible we should be making voting as accessible as possible. Encouraging youth to become educated voters today will help them to stay engaged in the process for years to come.

I support HB 2177 because I want to empower young people like myself, cut out administrative paperwork, and create more time for debate and discussion about issues that matter to the next generation of voting Oregonians. Thank you for your time and I urge your support of HB 2177.

Sincerely,

Uma Ilavarason