

I am a registered democrat, and a pastor, and I am writing concerning SJR 22/SB 838. I think these bills go too far. Yes, some 16 year olds are very mature. And some 30 year olds are very immature. But the maturity of some individuals is not the standard we should apply.

In Oregon we recognize that sex with a 16 year old is statutory rape, even if the 16 year old consents. Why? Because we recognize that at that age they are easily swayed by foolishness and they make poor decisions. And so we protect 16 year olds with statutory rape laws.

In Oregon a person must be 21 in order to purchase alcohol. Why? Because we recognize that, in general, people are not able to make sound judgments about drinking at a younger age. I was in college at UMASS when that state lowered the drinking age to 18. What I observed was a disaster. The state also recognized that it had made a mistake and they raised the drinking age to 20 in 1979 (well before the federal requirement of 21 was implemented).

And there other examples. The proposal to reduce the voting age to 16... and keep in mind that voting is our most important privilege, it is what determines what our laws such as statutory rape and drinking age laws, are to be... just does not make sense.

So I urge you to use some common sense and not change the voter age in Oregon. Don't let Oregon become a blind follower of fashionable trends. Let Oregon stand for common sense.

Thank you,
Steve Hudgik
Cannon Beach