

SB 838

Thank you Chair Burdick and committee

My name is Jordan Ohrt and I come here to oppose SB 838 and SJR 22

I am 35, but I remember being 16. There might be 16 year olds out there that might be able to handle this responsibility, but most have trouble managing themselves. Our own law tell us this:

You cannot legally enter into a contract until you are 18 or with parental consent in some cases

You cannot join the military until you are 18 unless you have parental consent at 17

You cannot drink alcohol and as recently as last year buy cigarettes until you are 21 because we do not believe adults at 18 are responsible enough to make good choices for themselves.

Between 16-18 children are given restrictive licenses because they have proven time and time again, they do not always make the best choices for themselves and others.

At 16 a parent is still responsible for the actions of their child and in most cases is financially responsible for them. This means that a 16 in general is not contributing to their community, state or federal government taxes. If they do not have the responsibility to govern over themselves, they should not be making choices and voting in ways that impact the rest of society.

Now, if this bill were speaking to 16-18 year olds that are emancipated and a judge deemed them fit to be adults, I would be behind giving them the responsibility and right to vote because they have been given the right to govern over themselves at this point.

Teenagers need to be involved. Their voices need to be heard, and we need to give them opportunities to feel and be heard. This is not the way to do it. Encouraging and allowing them to be on boards and committees at their schools and on a local level is a great way to do this. Having volunteer and intern opportunities even here at the capitol and in various areas of the community will help their voices be heard and recognized. An example of this is in my town of Stayton, we have a non-voting spot on our planning commission for a high schooler. Teenagers can be and should be involved in their government so that when they become an adult they can make the best choices and decisions and vote responsibly when the time comes, at 18.

Thank you