April 9, 2019

Representative Paul Holvey, Chair
House Committee on Rules
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court St. NE, HR C
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support for HB 2824

Chair Holvey and Members of the Committee:

I enthusiastically support HB 2824, which creates the Oregon Youth Council to advise the Governor on a variety of issues that affect young people in our state. The City of Hillsboro has a Youth Advisory Council (YAC) made up of about 30 high school age youth. They bring an important and valuable perspective in their advisory capacity as we consider policies and programs that affect their lives.

Recently, our YAC ventured into policy development. Over the last 18 months they spearheaded the development of the "Sustainable Shopping Initiative," which effectively bans the distribution at check-out of single-use plastic bags. They did an incredible job of unifying stakeholders and crafting a policy that is protective of the environment but sensitive to both consumers and businesses. City Council adopted that policy unanimously at the end of last year with the full support of affected stakeholders.

Beyond advising City Council on issues affecting youth and developing policy, the YAC program serves a critical and important purpose in creating a pipeline of civically engaged community leaders. This has tremendous intangible benefits for our community. Many of our YAC have become community leaders, are working in Washington County as staff for members of Congress, serving on City committees, and are working in internships and fellowships with the City. The YAC program has proven to both cultivate and retain our local talent and stand up a generation that can further the aims of representative democracy. I'm convinced the same benefits could be realized by the State with passage of HB 2824.

I hope my comments give you some local perspective on the benefits that could be realized by the State with the passage of HB 2824 and the creation of the Oregon Youth Council.

Sincerely,

Mayor Steve Callaway