



Natalie Khalil  
Senate Committee on Rules  
RE: Support SJR 25

March 11th, 2021

Chair Wagner, Vice-Chair Girod, and Members of the Senate Committee on Rules,

My name is Natalie Khalil and I'm currently based in Tualatin. I have been volunteering with Next Up for over three years now. I support SJR 25, the Our Future Our Vote Act, which proposes an amendment to the Oregon Constitution to lower the voting age from 18 years old to 16 years old.

As the first first generation Arab American in my family I've always been aware of how lucky I am to have the right to vote. Growing up my father, a refugee, would set up the electronic voting machines at the polls. My dad's eagerness and excitement to participate in democracy had a profound impact on me and how I view democracy. My father had been the actualization of the American Dream.

By 16 years old I was heavily involved with politics. I had joined a student group at my high school that called for more gun reform and that same year I started volunteering with Next Up. By the age of 17 I had pre registered many of my 16/ 17 year old classmates to vote. Just five days after I turned 18 I was testifying at the Oregon State Cap. for 16 and 17 year olds to get the right to vote. While registering my peers to vote, I could see the same eagerness and excitement they had and their desire to participate in the democratic process.

Lowering the voting age is a bold idea to strengthen our democracy. I am in full support of SJR 25 to send the question of lowering Oregon's voting age to voters, and as such, urge your support for this bill.

Sincerely,  
Natalie Khalil