

Sahar Muranovic  
Senate Committee on Rules  
Re: Support SB 776

March 12, 2021  
Chair Wagner, Vice-Chair Girod, and Members of the Senate Committee on Rules,

My name is Sahar Yarjani Muranovic, and I am the Vice Chair of the David Douglas School Board, member of Multnomah County's Community Involvement Committee, and an organizer and resident of East Portland. I am submitting testimony today in support of SB 776, which will allow 16 and 17 year olds to participate in school board elections.

My colleagues and I serve on a school board in order to provide equitable, informed, and meaningful education and services to students. They are the primary recipients of the services provided by our schools - and their lived experiences, needs, and concerns should inform district policy and priorities of school board members. Lowering the voting age to 16 for school board elections will ensure that school boards are responsive to the needs of all students. Our policies and direction will inform the next generation of adults, and our youth deserve to have a say. Youth organizers and activists have driven many powerful movements and causes, and their contributions deserve recognition and validation.

We have been met with so many obstacles this past year. Our youth have shown resilience and grit while navigating some of the most difficult times of their lives. What happens on school boards directly affects their lives and future and they deserve to be heard and their voices accounted for. I am asking the committee members to support and pass SB 776 for our youth, and our future.

Sincerely,  
Sahar Yarjani Muranovic