



February 9, 2021

House Committee on Rules

Support HB 2679

Chair Holvey, Vice-Chairs Drazan and Smith Warner, and Members of the House Committee on Rules,

My name is Danica Leung, and I am a Next Up Action Fund supporter who lives in Portland, Oregon, and Multnomah County. I am in firm support of HB 2679 to allow 17-year-olds to vote in primary elections if they are 18 by the general election.

Knowing that one's voice matters makes all the difference. As a 17-year-old myself, I can personally attest to the intelligence, determination, and political will of my age group. I became involved in understanding politics and social issues from my freshman year of high school and most importantly, how to engage in government. This issue is especially important to me as a young Asian woman because our community is severely underrepresented in electoral politics, and because historically, my community has faced many barriers to voting.

It is in the best interest of all of us to encourage and prolong civic engagement in order to foster a generation of youth who are energized and empowered, instead of disinterested and disempowered. Studies show that voting is a civic habit - and the earlier you engage people the more likely they are to turn out in future elections, and we have an opportunity to make that a reality in Oregon.

If this bill passes, it would truly amplify my generation's voice. 17 year-olds are just as ready and willing to engage in government and elections as much as 18-year-olds, and it is only logical to allow those who are eligible to vote in the general election to be given the opportunity to determine the candidate choices. House Committee on Rules Members, I strongly urge you to pass HB 2679.

Sincerely,

Danica Leung

*Next Up Action Fund*