

HB 2694 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Rules

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Meeting Dates: 2/21

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Permits a 17-year-old who is registered to vote, affiliated with a major political party, and will be 18 years old on or before the date of the general election to participate in primary election for purpose of selecting the party's nominees. Requires major political party to provide certified copy of current party rule to Secretary of State allowing affiliated 17-year-olds to participate in primary election not later than 90th day before primary election. Requires county clerks to maintain records of and mail portion of official ballot to persons under the age of 18 registered as affiliated with major political party and eligible to participate in selecting party nominees at primary election. Appropriates General Fund to Secretary of State to allocate to county clerks for carrying out provisions of measure. Applies to primaries held on or after January 1, 2024.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Oregonians must register 21 days before election day and must be a U.S. citizen, Oregon resident, and at least 16 years old. Once registered, an individual will receive a ballot and instructions in the mail about two weeks before an election. Registered voters under the age of 18 do not receive a ballot until the first election that occurs on or after the voter's 18th birthday.

Under Oregon Motor Voter, if a person is not already registered to vote, they receive a card and a pre-paid postage return envelope from the Secretary of State Elections Division following their qualifying interaction with the Department of Motor Vehicles. This card provides the voters with three options: (1) do nothing and be registered to vote as a nonaffiliated voter; (2) choose a political party by returning the card; or, (3) use the card to opt-out of voter registration.

For primary elections, only registered voters of a major political party can vote for candidates of that party. At the primary election, voters who are not registered in one of the major political parties will receive a ballot containing only nonpartisan contests, such as judicial elections.

House Bill 2694 permits a 17-year old who is registered to vote, affiliated with a major party, and will be 18 years old at the time of the general election to participate in the primary election for the purpose of selecting the party's nominees if allowed by the adopted rules of the major political party.