

## HJR 20 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

### House Committee On Rules

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**Meeting Dates:** 2/21

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#### **WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:**

Proposes amendment to Section 2, Article II of the Oregon Constitution lowering voting age from 18 years of age to 16 years of age. Refers proposed amendment to people for their approval or rejection at next regular general election.

#### **ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

#### **EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:**

No amendment.

#### **BACKGROUND:**

The U.S. Congress tried to lower the voting age to 18 in federal and state elections through the Voting Rights Act Amendments of 1970. The U.S. Supreme Court held in *Oregon v. Mitchell*, 400 U.S. 112 (1970) that Congress has the authority to regulate voting requirements in federal elections, but not in state and local elections. In 1971, the 26th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution lowered the legal voting age in the United States from 21 to 18.

Under current law, an individual who is otherwise qualified and at least 16 years of age may register to vote, although the registration does not become effective until the person attains 18 years of age.

House Joint Resolution 20 proposes an amendment to Section 2, Article II of the Oregon Constitution lowering the voting age from 18 years of age to 16 years of age.