

Submitter: Lance Azevedo
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure: HJR20

If 18 is the age of legal adulthood, why can 16-year-olds still be considered independent of their parents for tax purposes? And if we trust 16-year-olds and 17-year-olds to make important decisions like joining the military or making their own medical decisions, why can't we trust them to vote?

As for the suggestion that this is just about "harvesting ballots," that's a cynical view of young people's political engagement. The truth is, young people are some of the most passionate and informed activists out there, and they deserve a say in the democratic process.

And concerns about bribery and coercion are unfounded. We already have laws in place to prevent voter fraud, and there's no evidence that 16 and 17-year-olds are more susceptible to these kinds of influences than anyone else.

Ultimately, lowering the voting age is about expanding access to democracy and empowering the next generation of leaders. It's time to stop clinging to outdated notions of who deserves a voice in our government and start embracing the full potential of our young people.