

Submitter: Michelle Barbarino  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Rules  
Measure: HJR20

So the opposition thinks that only certain people should have the right to vote and be represented in our government? That sounds like a very undemocratic and elitist viewpoint. The fact is, 16-year-olds are already considered mature enough to drive, work, pay taxes, and even be tried as adults in some cases. Why shouldn't they have a say in the decisions that affect their lives and their futures? Additionally, studies have shown that when young people are engaged in the political process early on, they are more likely to stay engaged and become lifelong voters. By denying them the right to vote, we are essentially cutting them off from a crucial aspect of civic engagement and participation. Don't you think we should be encouraging young people to be active citizens, rather than discouraging them? Oregon has a long history of progressive policies and has always been a leader in expanding voting rights. Lowering the voting age to 16 would be consistent with our state's values and principles. It's time to stop treating young people as second-class citizens and give them the respect and representation they deserve.