

Submitter: Charles Musick  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Rules  
Measure: HJR20

The opposition argument seems to be that 16 and 17-year-olds are too reckless to make responsible decisions. But if that's the case, why are they allowed to drive, work, pay taxes, make medical decisions, enroll in community college, and even join the military? Are those not also important decisions that could have consequences? They also seem to think that 16-year-olds are unable to understand the long-term consequences of their actions. But isn't it precisely because they have a longer life ahead of them that they should have a say in shaping the future they will inherit? They suggest that 16-year-olds are only interested in their own benefits and don't consider where the money comes from. But is that not a criticism that could be leveled at voters of any age, including politicians who are often beholden to special interests? They argue that allowing 16-year-olds to vote would cause problems for county clerks, but that's just speculation. Many other countries have successfully lowered the voting age, and it's not clear why Oregon would be any different. Yes, the OCCA has testified that there would be some issues that need to be addressed, but Rep. Hoa Nguyen is fully prepared to address those concerns if it's passed by the people. As you know, it will have to be put back in the legislature if passed by the people to implement this legislation.