

Government Administration and Elections Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HJ-216

RESOLUTION PROPOSING A STATE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT TO ALLOW INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE ATTAINED THE AGE OF SIXTEEN TO APPLY FOR ADMISSION AS ELECTORS AND TO BE SO ADMITTED UPON

Title: ATTAINING THE AGE OF EIGHTEEN.

Vote Date: 3/22/2024

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 3/8/2024

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Government Administration & Elections Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

This resolution intends to encourage civic engagement and participation in the government process amongst young people by allowing 16-year-olds to pre-register to vote through the Department of Motor Vehicles so they can become an elector upon turning 18 years of age.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Stephanie Thomas, Connecticut Secretary of The State: Supports this bill because she believes it is the responsibility of the Secretary to educate voters and encourage a younger generation to become engaged in the civic process. States that 18 states and Washington D.C. currently allow 16-year-olds to pre-register to vote, which has shown to increase youth turnout when these prospective voters turn 18. Also states that the system would be synced with the DMV and would allow teens to pre-register upon receiving a learner's permit or driver's license.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Jess Zaccagnino, Policy Counsel, ACLU of Connecticut: Supports this bill because it is a commonsense proposal to encourage voter turnout amongst young people by engaging them in the civic process before they can vote. States that 18 states and Washington D.C. have already allowed 16-year-olds to pre-register, and that those places have seen increased

voters turnout. Also states that this bill would not require additional resources for a new voter database.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Linda Dalessio, Dr: Opposes this bill because it is an unnecessary change that can only open more opportunities for fraud to occur. States that 16-year-olds should not pre-register because most do not know what either party stands for and what toxic policies they propose. Also states that the ERIC voter roll system should no longer be exempt from FOIA, as voter roll irregularities cannot be checked by members of the public.

GENERAL COMMENTS:

Sue Larsen, Legislative Chair, ROVAC: Provides general comments that despite supporting the concept of the bill, she believes that the registrars do not currently have a system set up to handle this process. States that there are several concerns about the implementation of this, such as the roll of the DMV in a voting-related process and whether registrars should still visit high schools once a year. Also states that the pre-registered voter could be moved to the inactive list before turning 18, which could prevent them from being able to vote in their first election.

Reported by: Gabriel Marques, Assistant Clerk Date: 4/3/2024