



49 South Hotel Street, Room 314 | Honolulu, HI 96813
www.lwv-hawaii.com | 808.531.7448 | voters@lwv-hawaii.com | @LWV-Hawaii on Facebook

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Friday, February 7, 2020, 10:00 a.m., Room 016

SB 4, PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO THE HAWAII STATE CONSTITUTION TO AMEND
THE QUALIFYING AGE OF VOTERS FOR ANY STATE OR LOCAL ELECTION

TESTIMONY

Janet Mason, Legislative Committee, League of Women Voters of Hawaii

Chair Rhoads, Vice-Chair Keohokalole, and Committee Members:

Currently, the League takes no position on this bill, which proposes to lower the voting age to 16 for Hawaii's state and local elections. This year, we have instead focused on passing Automatic Voter Registration and improving voter education resources. These priorities are motivated by our goal of increasing voter turnout among those already eligible to vote.

The League is aware that several municipalities have lowered their voting ages¹, that at least one state has attempted to lower its voting age², and that such a policy was proposed last session here in Hawaii³. One such Constitutional Amendment has also been introduced in the 116th U. S. Congress⁴.

Lowering the voting age to 16 has the potential for increasing both registration and turnout. By empowering voters to get involved in civic decision-making sooner, there is a better likelihood of increased turnout in the long-term. The League heartily supports this goal.

However, unless the voting age is also lowered to 16 for Federal elections, passage of the amendment would require County Clerks and the Office of Elections to manage two lists of eligible voters: 1) those eligible to vote in federal, state and local elections and 2) those eligible to vote in state and local elections only. Unless the County Clerks and Office of Elections are given the time and resources for such an approach, there is a risk that some voters could be disenfranchised by being placed on the incorrect roll.



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We will continue to monitor efforts across the country to lower the voting age at all levels of government. We would also like to hear from elections officials about their readiness to implement this proposed Constitutional amendment. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

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1. Douglas, Joshua. "Expanding Voting Rights Through Local Law". *American Constitution Society for Law and Policy*. https://www.acslaw.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Expanding_Voting_Rights_Through_Local_Law_-_ACS_Issue_Brief.pdf, accessed 20 January 2020.
 2. Gstalter, Morgan. "Oregon lawmakers seek to lower state voting age to 16". *The Hill*. <https://thehill.com/homenews/state-watch/430678-oregon-lawmakers-seek-to-lower-state-voting-age-to-16>, accessed 20 January 2020.
 3. Lovell, Blaze. "Bill Would Lower Voting Age To 16 For State and Local Elections". *Honolulu Civil Beat*. <https://www.civilbeat.org/2019/01/bill-would-lower-voting-age-to-16-for-state-and-local-elections/>, accessed 20 January 2020.
 4. House Joint Resolution 23 was introduced by Rep. Grace Meng (NY-6) on 09 January 2019. <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-joint-resolution/23/text?r=2&s=4>, accessed 20 January 2020.

Statement Before The
SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY
Friday, February 7, 2020
10:00 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 016

in consideration of
SB 4
PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO THE HAWAII STATE CONSTITUTION TO AMEND THE QUALIFYING AGE OF VOTERS FOR ANY STATE OR LOCAL ELECTION.

Chair RHOADS, Vice Chair KEOHOKALOLE, and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee

Common Cause Hawaii supports SB 4, which proposes a constitutional amendment to lower the qualifying age of voters for any state or local election to sixteen years of age.

Common Cause Hawaii is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, grassroots organization dedicated to reforming government and strengthening democracy through voting modernization efforts that increase civic engagement, voter turnout, and voter participation in our democratic processes.

Studies have shown that voting is a habit, which develop over repetition and can become strongly ingrained if developed early. SB 4 will allow people to vote starting at age sixteen. If we trust people to be behind the wheel of an automobile at age sixteen, we should trust them with a ballot. SB 4 is an important bill to allow young people to vote and continue to vote their entire lives, leading to a strong and vibrant democracy. "We do not have government by the majority. We have government by the majority who participate." Thomas Jefferson.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 4, and Common Cause Hawaii respectfully urges the Committee members to pass SB 4 out of your Committee. If you have further questions of me, please contact me at sma@commoncause.org.

Very respectfully yours,

Sandy Ma
Executive Director, Common Cause Hawaii

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE ON PRISONS

P.O. Box 37158, Honolulu, HI 96837-0158

Phone/E-Mail: (808) 927-1214 / kat.caphi@gmail.com



COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair

Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Vice Chair

Friday, February 7, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Room 016

SUPPORT for SB 4 - RIGHT TO VOTE FOR 16 YEAR OLDS

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Keohokalole and Members of the Committee!

My name is Kat Brady and I am the Coordinator of Community Alliance on Prisons, a community initiative promoting smart justice policies in Hawai'i for more than two decades. This testimony is respectfully offered on behalf of the families of **ASHLEY GREY, DAISY KASITATI, JOEY O'MALLEY, JESSICA FORTSON** and all the people who have died under the "care and custody" of the state including the ten people who died in the last 5 months of 2019 and for **JAMES BORLING-SALAS** who was beaten and died on January 16th. We also remember the approximately 5,200 Hawai'i individuals living behind bars or under the "care and custody" of the Department of Public Safety on any given day and we are always mindful that more than 1,200 of Hawai'i's imprisoned people are serving their sentences abroad - thousands of miles away from their loved ones, their homes and, for the disproportionate number of incarcerated Kanaka Maoli, far, far from their ancestral lands.

SB 4 proposes a constitutional amendment to lower the qualifying age of voters for any state or local election to sixteen years of age.

Constitutional law expert Michael Morley said states, for the most part, are empowered to define their own electorates. States have broader power than Congress to set the voting age for state and local elections, though Congress regulates federal offices, he added.

Community Alliance on Prisons supports this measure. Our youth are really smart! Witnessing the students in Parkland, Florida turn their horror into a national peaceful movement is truly a lesson in restorative justice. Our students in Hawai'i, who organized and led the huge March for our Lives and rally made us all so proud. These youth have not only stepped up - they have taken the lead!

The right to vote is fundamental to a vibrant democracy and democracy must be exercised to remain strong. Sixteen-year old youth have demonstrated that they will exercise their rights; now it's time to grant them the right to let their votes matter as well. Let's start building good citizens while our youth are high-school age so that voting becomes the norm, not the exception.

Hawai'i's voting numbers are so low. The Office of Elections shows the incredible drop in voter turnout. In 1970, Hawai'i had a 71.7% voter turnout; by 2016, Hawai'i voter turnout dropped to 34.8%. Encouraging 16-year-olds to vote is a great way to engage our youth and increase turnout (and to also encourage their parents to vote as well!).

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify in support of this measure.



Ka 'Aha Kenekoa
Committee on Judiciary

Pō 'alima, Pepeluali 7, 2020
Lumi 'Aha Kūkā 016
Ke Kapikala Moku 'āina
415 South Beretānia Street

Re: SB4 - Relating to Voting

Aloha Luna Ho 'omalu Karl Rhoads, Hope Luna Ho 'omalu Jarrett Keohokalole, and members of the Senate Committees on Judiciary.

The Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs **SUPPORTS SB4**. This bill proposes a constitutional amendment to lower the voting age to sixteen for all state and local elections.

At its 60th annual convention, the Association adopted resolution 2019-24, urging the State of Hawai'i to extend the voting franchise to eligible residents aged sixteen and seventeen to support a culture of civic engagement.

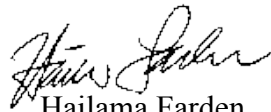
Hawai'i faces a crisis of civic engagement and we consistently rank last in the nation in voter turnout. Voting is a habit and a person's first election is critical to establishing that habit. In fact, voting in one election can increase the probability that a person will vote in the next election by over fifty percent. Evidence from cities, counties, and countries that have lowered the voting age supports the argument that the age of 16 is a better time to start the habit of voting than 18. Sixteen and seventeen year-olds work and pay taxes on their income, can drive, and in some cases, are tried in adult courts. Lowering the age of enfranchisement is fair and will create a culture of voting in our state, eventually leading to higher turnout among all age groups.

Thus, the Association respectfully urges the Committee to **PASS SB4**.

The civic club movement was founded in 1918 by Congressional Delegate Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalanianaʻole with the creation of the Hawaiian Civic Club; the Association was formally organized in 1959 and has grown to a confederation of over sixty (60) Hawaiian Civic Clubs located throughout the State of Hawaiʻi and the United States. The Association is the oldest Hawaiian community-based grassroots organization. The Association is governed by a 16-member Board of Directors; advocates for improved welfare of Native Hawaiians in culture, health, economic development, education, social welfare, and nationhood; and perpetuates and preserves language, history, music, dance and other Native Hawaiian cultural traditions.

Mahalo for allowing us to share our *mana* ʻo.

Me ka ʻoia ʻi ʻo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Hailama Farden".

Hailama Farden

Pelekikena

ASSOCIATION OF HAWAIIAN CIVIC CLUBS

A RESOLUTION

No. 2019 -24

URGING THE STATE OF HAWAI‘I TO EXTEND THE VOTING FRANCHISE TO ELIGIBLE RESIDENTS AGED SIXTEEN AND SEVENTEEN TO SUPPORT A CULTURE OF CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

WHEREAS, the Hawaiian Civic Club movement was founded in 1918 by Congressional Delegate Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalaniana‘ole with the creation of the Hawaiian Civic Club; and

WHEREAS, the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs was formally organized in 1959 and has grown to a confederation of over 60 Hawaiian Civic Clubs located throughout the State of Hawai‘i and the United States; and

WHEREAS, Prince Kūhiō, as the embodiment of the values of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, began his civic life at a young age, and at seventeen he represented the Kingdom of Hawai‘i as a diplomat to Japan, and he continued to serve with honor and distinction throughout his life; and

WHEREAS, only 52.7 percent of registered voters cast ballots during Hawai‘i’s 2018 general election; and

WHEREAS, according to the United States Elections Project, since 1986, young voters aged 18 to 29 have had the lowest tendency to vote of any age demographic, and in 2018, just 32.6 percent of young voters cast ballots, compared to 45.8 percent for voters aged 30 to 44, 56.2 percent for voters aged 45 to 59, and 65.5 percent for voters age 60 and older; and

WHEREAS, according to *Lowering the Voting Age for Local Elections in 2017 and Beyond, Generation Citizen, Ver. 2.0 – Jan. 2017*, voting is a habit and a person’s first election is critical to establishing that habit, and evidence from cities, counties, and countries that have lowered the voting age supports the argument that the age of 16 is a better time to start the habit of voting than 18; and

WHEREAS, the same article indicates voting in one election can increase the probability that a person will vote in the next election by over fifty percent and that shows that early voting experiences are an important determinant of future voting behavior; and

WHEREAS, 16- and 17-year-olds work and pay taxes on their income, can drive, and in some cases, are tried in adult courts; and

WHEREAS, seventeen nations have implemented policies of sixteen and seventeen-year-olds voting in some or all elections, including Argentina, Austria, Brazil, Cuba, Ecuador, Germany, Indonesia, Malta, Nicaragua, Norway, Scotland, and Sudan; and

WHEREAS, Takoma Park, Hyattsville, and Greenbelt in Maryland have lowered the voting age to 16 for local elections, and Berkeley, California, has lowered the voting age to 16 for school board elections; and

WHEREAS, extending the voting franchise to Hawai'i residents aged sixteen and seventeen in local elections statewide coupled with programs like robust civic education at the high school levels will likely increase the civic engagement of young people and help to instill a culture of voting, eventually leading to higher turnout among all demographics.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs at its 60th Annual Convention in Lahaina, Maui, in the malama of Welehu and the rising of Lā'au Pau, this 16th day of November 2019, urging the State of Hawai'i to extend the voting franchise to eligible residents aged sixteen and seventeen to support a culture of civic engagement; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a certified copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Governor of the State of Hawai'i, President of the State Senate, Speaker of the State House of Representatives, Chair of the State Senate subject matter committee on Hawaiian Affairs, Chair of the State House subject matter committee on Hawaiian Affairs, Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, and all County Mayors.



The undersigned hereby certifies that the foregoing Resolution was duly adopted in the malama of Welehu and the rising of Lā'au Pau on the 16th day of November 2019, at the 60th Annual Convention of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs in Lahaina, Maui.



Hailama V. K. K. Farden, President

MOKU O MANOKALANIPŌ
THE KAUA'I COUNCIL OF THE ASSOCIATION OF HAWAIIAN CIVIC CLUBS

Date: Peleluali 7, 2020

To: Ka 'Aha Kenekoa- Committee on Judiciary

From: Moku o Manokalanipō, The Kaua'i Council of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs
Malia Nobrega-Olivera, President
malianob@gmail.com

Re: SB4- Relating to Voting

Aloha e Luna Ho'omalua Karl Rhoads, Hope Luna Ho'omalua Jarrett Keohokalole, and members of the Senate Committees on Judiciary,

I'm writing on behalf of Moku o Manokalanipō, The Kaua'i Council of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs which represents the four (4) Hawaiian Civic Clubs based on the island of Kaua'i.

Moku o Manokalanipō SUPPORTS SB4 . This bill proposes a constitutional amendment to lower the voting age to sixteen for all state and local elections. Our members actively participated in our 60th annual convention on the island of Maui and the Association adopted resolution 2019-24, urging the State of Hawai'i to extend the voting franchise to eligible residents aged sixteen and seventeen to support a culture of civic engagement.

Our numbers here in Hawai'i are always very low and we need to support our young adults to get engaged in their communities in more ways than one. We want to help them form healthy habits in all aspects of their life from a young age and like our leader, Prince Kūhiō, he chose to be a leader and had a vision for our people. Evidence from cities, counties, and countries that have lowered the voting age supports the argument that the age of 16 is a better time to start the habit of voting than 18. Sixteen and seventeen year-olds work and pay taxes on their income, can drive, and in some cases, are tried in adult courts. Lowering the age of enfranchisement is fair and will create a culture of voting in our state, eventually leading to higher turnout among all age groups.

Therefore, Moku o Manokalanipō respectfully urges the Committee to PASS SB4.

The Hawaiian civic club movement was founded in 1918 by Congressional Delegate Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalaniana'ole with the creation of the Hawaiian Civic Club; the Association was formally organized in 1959 and in 1968, the Hawaiian Civic Clubs on the island of Kaua'i organized Moku o Manokalanipō, the Kaua'i Council of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs.



**ASSOCIATION OF HAWAIIAN CIVIC CLUBS
HAWAI‘I COUNCIL - MOKU O KEAWE ‘APANA**

P.O. Box 7164 | Hilo, Hawai‘i | 96720

Committee on Judiciary

Friday, February 7, 2020 Conference Room 16

Re: SB4 - Relating to Voting

Aloha Chair Rhoads and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary,

The Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs – Hawai‘i Council **SUPPORTS** SB4. This bill proposes a constitutional amendment to lower the voting age to sixteen for all state and local elections.

At its 60th annual convention, the Association adopted resolution 2019-24, urging the State of Hawai‘i to extend the voting franchise to eligible residents aged sixteen and seventeen to support a culture of civic engagement.

Hawai‘i faces a crisis of civic engagement and we consistently rank last in the nation in voter turnout. Voting is a habit and a person’s first election is critical to establishing that habit. In fact, voting in one election can increase the probability that a person will vote in the next election by over fifty percent. Evidence from cities, counties, and countries that have lowered the voting age supports the argument that the age of 16 is a better time to start the habit of voting than 18. Sixteen and seventeen year-olds work and pay taxes on their income, can drive, and in some cases, are tried in adult courts. Lowering the age of enfranchisement is fair and will create a culture of voting in our state, eventually leading to higher turnout among all age groups.

The Hawai‘i Council of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs urges the Committee to **PASS** SB4.

The Hawai‘i Council is comprised of nine (9) active clubs on the Island of Hawai‘i and that we are part of a collective of fifty (51) other clubs throughout the State of Hawai‘i and the United States that meet annually to vote on resolutions that advocate for the betterment of the conditions for Native Hawaiians.

Mahalo nui,

Shane Palacat-Nelsen
Pelekikena



KE ONE O KĀKUHIIHEWA

O'ahu Council of the
Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs

BENTON KEALII PANG, PH.D.,-HAWAIIAN CIVIC CLUB OF
HONOLULU
PELEKIKENA

JACOB KA'ŌMAKAOKALĀ AKI-KING KAMEHAMEHA HCC
HOPE PELEKIKENA

GEORGIANA NAVARRO-MĀKAHA HCC
HOPE PELEKIKENA 'ELUA

ALBERTA LOW-PEARL HARBOR HCC
PU'UKU

ROTH PUHALA -KING KAMEHAMEHA HCC
PELEKIKENA IHO NEI

TERI LOO-KO'OLAUPOKO HCC
KĀKAU 'ŌLELO

CHRISTINE "CHRISSEY" ANJO-PEARL HARBOR HCC
HOLE KĀKAU 'ŌLELO

'AHAHUI SIWILA HAWAII O KAPOLEI
LANCE HOLDEN

ALI'I PAUAHI HCC
KEHAULANI LUM

'EWA-PU'ULOLO HCC
MARLEEN KAU'I SERRAO

HCC OF HONOLULU
ANITA NAONE

KAILUA HCC
MAPUANA DE SILVA

KALIHI-PĀLAMA HCC
KAIMO MUHLESTEIN

KING KAMEHAMEHA HCC
LETANI PELTIER

KO'OLAULOLO HCC
RANAE "TESSIE" FONOMOANA

KO'OLAUPOKO HCC
ALICE P. HEWETT

LUALUALEI HCC
SHIRLINE HO

MĀKAHA HCC
LUANN LANKFORD-FAVORITO

MAUNALUA HCC
ROSE KITTY SIMONDS

NA LANI 'EHA HCC
R. KELANI RAMOS

NĀNĀIKAPONO HCC
JAYCINE HICKS

PAPAKŌLE'A HCC
KEALI'I LUM

PEARL HARBOR HCC
ANTOINETTE LEE

PRINCE KŪHIŌ HCC
A. MAKANA PARIS

PRINCESS KAI'ULANI HCC
RUSTY RODENHURST

QUEEN EMMA HCC
RAWLETTE P. KRAUT

HCC OF WĀHIAWA
MARIE "MĀLIA" DOO

HCC OF WAIALUA
MAKALAPUA CASSON-FISHER

WAI'ANA'E HCC
CYNTHIA ENRIQUEZ

WAIKIKI HCC
L. PI'IKEA TOMCZYK

HCC OF WAIMĀNALO
KALANI KALIMA

Ka 'Aha Kenekoa
Committee on Judiciary

Pō'alima, Pepeluai 7, 2020

Lumi 'Aha Kūkā 016
Ke Kapikala Moku'āina
415 South Beretānia Street

Re: SB4 - Relating to Voting

Aloha Luna Ho'omalua Karl Rhoads, Hope Luna Ho'omalua Jarrett Keohokalole, and members of the Senate Committees on Judiciary.

Ke One O Kākuhihewa-O'ahu Council for the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs **SUPPORTS SB4**. This bill proposes a constitutional amendment to lower the voting age to sixteen for all state and local elections.

At its 60th annual convention, the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, of which O'ahu Council is a member, adopted resolution 2019-24, urging the State of Hawai'i to extend the voting franchise to eligible residents aged sixteen and seventeen to support a culture of civic engagement.

Hawai'i faces a crisis of civic engagement and we consistently rank last in the nation in voter turnout. Voting is a habit and a person's first election is critical to establishing that habit. In fact, voting in one election can increase the probability that a person will vote in the next election by over fifty percent. Evidence from cities, counties, and countries that have lowered the voting age supports the argument that the age of 16 is a better time to start the habit of voting than 18. Sixteen and seventeen year-olds work and pay taxes on their income, can drive, and in some cases, are tried in adult courts. Lowering the age of enfranchisement is fair and will create a culture of voting in our state, eventually leading to higher turnout among all age groups.

Thus, Ke One O Kākuhihewa respectfully urges the Committee to **PASS SB4**.



Ke One O Kakūhihewa is a native Hawaiian council made up of 25 civic clubs on the island of O‘ahu. Our oldest member, Hawaiian Civic Club of Honolulu was established by Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalaniana‘ole on December 7, 1918.

Mahalo for allowing us to share our *mana‘o*.

Sincerely,



Benton Kealii Pang, Ph.D.

ASSOCIATION OF HAWAIIAN CIVIC CLUBS

A RESOLUTION

No. 2019 -24

URGING THE STATE OF HAWAI'I TO EXTEND THE VOTING FRANCHISE TO ELIGIBLE RESIDENTS AGED SIXTEEN AND SEVENTEEN TO SUPPORT A CULTURE OF CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

WHEREAS, the Hawaiian Civic Club movement was founded in 1918 by Congressional Delegate Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalaniana'ole with the creation of the Hawaiian Civic Club; and

WHEREAS, the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs was formally organized in 1959 and has grown to a confederation of over 60 Hawaiian Civic Clubs located throughout the State of Hawai'i and the United States; and

WHEREAS, Prince Kūhiō, as the embodiment of the values of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, began his civic life at a young age, and at seventeen he represented the Kingdom of Hawai'i as a diplomat to Japan, and he continued to serve with honor and distinction throughout his life; and

WHEREAS, only 52.7 percent of registered voters cast ballots during Hawai'i's 2018 general election; and

WHEREAS, according to the United States Elections Project, since 1986, young voters aged 18 to 29 have had the lowest tendency to vote of any age demographic, and in 2018, just 32.6 percent of young voters cast ballots, compared to 45.8 percent for voters aged 30 to 44, 56.2 percent for voters aged 45 to 59, and 65.5 percent for voters age 60 and older; and

WHEREAS, according to *Lowering the Voting Age for Local Elections in 2017 and Beyond, Generation Citizen, Ver. 2.0 – Jan. 2017*, voting is a habit and a person's first election is critical to establishing that habit, and evidence from cities, counties, and countries that have lowered the voting age supports the argument that the age of 16 is a better time to start the habit of voting than 18; and

WHEREAS, the same article indicates voting in one election can increase the probability that a person will vote in the next election by over fifty percent and that shows that early voting experiences are an important determinant of future voting behavior; and

WHEREAS, 16- and 17-year-olds work and pay taxes on their income, can drive, and in some cases, are tried in adult courts; and

WHEREAS, seventeen nations have implemented policies of sixteen and seventeen-year-olds voting in some or all elections, including Argentina, Austria, Brazil, Cuba, Ecuador, Germany, Indonesia, Malta, Nicaragua, Norway, Scotland, and Sudan; and

WHEREAS, Takoma Park, Hyattsville, and Greenbelt in Maryland have lowered the voting age to 16 for local elections, and Berkeley, California, has lowered the voting age to 16 for school board elections; and

WHEREAS, extending the voting franchise to Hawai'i residents aged sixteen and seventeen in local elections statewide coupled with programs like robust civic education at the high school levels will likely increase the civic engagement of young people and help to instill a culture of voting, eventually leading to higher turnout among all demographics.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs at its 60th Annual Convention in Lahaina, Maui, in the malama of Welehu and the rising of Lā'au Pau, this 16th day of November 2019, urging the State of Hawai'i to extend the voting franchise to eligible residents aged sixteen and seventeen to support a culture of civic engagement; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a certified copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Governor of the State of Hawai'i, President of the State Senate, Speaker of the State House of Representatives, Chair of the State Senate subject matter committee on Hawaiian Affairs, Chair of the State House subject matter committee on Hawaiian Affairs, Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, and all County Mayors.



The undersigned hereby certifies that the foregoing Resolution was duly adopted in the malama of Welehu and the rising of Lā'au Pau on the 16th day of November 2019, at the 60th Annual Convention of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs in Lahaina, Maui.



Hailama V. K. K. Farden, President



Luna O Na Papa Alakai

Senate Committee on Judiciary

Pelekikena
A. Makana Paris

Friday, February 7, 2020
10:00 am Conference Room 016

Hope Pekekikena
Ekahi
Randi Fernandez

State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

Hope Pelekikena
Elua
Kā'eo Kealoha-
Lindsey

Re: SB4 - PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO THE HAWAII STATE
CONSTITUTION TO AMEND THE QUALIFYING AGE OF VOTERS FOR ANY
STATE OR LOCAL ELECTION

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice-Chair Keohokalole, and members of the Senate committee
on Judiciary:

Puuku
Denise Kekuna

The Prince Kūhiō Hawaiian Civic Club **SUPPORTS** SB4. This bill proposes a constitutional amendment to lower the qualifying age of voters for any state or local election to sixteen years of age. At its 60th annual convention, the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs adopted resolution 2018-38, urging the State of Hawai'i to extend the voting franchise to eligible residents aged sixteen and seventeen to support a culture of civic engagement.

Kakauolelo Hoopaa
Sai Furukawa

I maika 'i ke kalo i ka 'ōhā.

Kakauolelo Hooholo
Palapala
Kamuela Werner

The goodness of the taro is judged by the young plant it produces. We believe that it is up to the *mākua* and *kūpuna*, the parental and elder generations, to adequately train, equip, and empower the younger generations in civic engagement and democracy. We wish to encourage the development of educated and informed citizens that recognize their life-long *kuleana* of caring for their society. Lowering the voter age to 16 helps us all to do that.


Pelekikena Hala
Koke
Yvonne 'PeeWee'
Ryan

Founded in 1964, PKHCC was organized to promote the education and social welfare of people of Hawaiian ancestry and objectives include supporting high ethical standards in business, industry and the professional fields of enterprise.

Luna Alakai
Alan Akao
Kuni Agard
Puamana Crabbe
Kanani Pali
Marlene Sai
Bruce Wong

PKHCC urges the committee to **PASS SB4.**

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 4728
Honolulu ~ Hawaii
96812

Me ke aloha,


A. Makana Paris
Pelekikena
president@pkhcc.org

www.pkhcc.org

Founded in 1964
by Liliuokalani
Kawananakoa Morris

SB-4

Submitted on: 2/6/2020 9:58:25 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/7/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Rev. T. J. FitzGerald	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

Aloha Friends,

I write in support of the amendment to the constitution to bring the voting age of Hawai'i into harmony with the reality in which we live today and in harmony with the many ways Hawai'i has led the way for a nation I dare say, at times, does not deserve the many gifts the people of these islands offer the world.

First, to confer upon a group of people the right to participate actively in government *before* beloved members of that group are required to register for the selective service only makes sense, from a practical perspective.

Second, the challenges the state faces annually and daily in the administration and provision of an education for all of its youngest minds impacts directly those who are asking now for the right to join in facing these challenges. It is only fitting to include the voices of those impacted by these challenges and whose lives will be shaped most directly by action or inaction around the pressing questions raised by education.

Third, voter apathy is a real concern. When a group is passionately requesting the right to vote and add well-informed and engaged voices to the democratic process, why would a barrier to this request be necessary?

Finally, a full life of meaning and consequence calls all who seek peace, all who seek justice, to do more than stand on the sidelines lobbing criticism or rebuke. In this request, more members of the human family are calling for entrance into the community of souls who guide, protect, and nurture our communal life in these lands. This is a sacred call, and a call to all persons of conscience to act in the best interest of these lands. I urge all to listen carefully and well to the generation rising now. They have more to share than we might possibly know.

Mahalo

Reverend T. J. FitzGerald
First Unitarian Church of Honolulu

SB-4

Submitted on: 2/5/2020 5:51:32 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/7/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Carla Allison	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support lowering the voting age to 16 as it will drive interest in politics among younger Americans while they are learning about the subject in high school. It will also drive a higher level of voter awareness and turnout, perhaps some youth will positively influence their parents to get out and vote. Some argue that 16 year olds are not responsible enough to be allowed to vote. Well, sixteen year olds have shown over and over the cognitive abilities to take SAT exams, exams that require skills to process information. Certainly they can do the same while voting. Let's get this done for our Hawaii youth who care about our country and the process by which it operates.

SB-4

Submitted on: 2/5/2020 9:25:34 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/7/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dylan P. Armstrong	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Re: **SB 4**

As a parent, I support lowering the voting age to 16 for all elections. 16-year-olds have the cognitive abilities to take the **SAT** exam, thus they have the necessary skills to process information and vote.

Below is an article from March 2019, where Speaker of the House **Nancy Pelosi** supports lowering the voting age to 16 nationwide for federal elections. With movement on the federal level, Hawaii needs to take the lead and be the first to state to give voting rights to its 16 year-olds.

Mahalo

Gloria Borland
Honolulu

Pelosi says she backs lowering voting age to 16

BY JOHN BOWDEN - 03/14/19 03:19 PM EDT



March 14, 2019

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) voiced her support on Thursday for lowering the federal voting age to 16, telling reporters during a press conference that doing so would be a boon to voter engagement in the U.S.

Pelosi said Thursday that lowering the voting age would drive interest in politics among younger Americans who are learning about the subject in high school. The Speaker said that changing the voting age to 16 would help drive a higher level of voter awareness and turnout.

"I myself have always been for lowering the voting age to 16," Pelosi said. "I think it's really important to capture kids when they're in high school, when they're interested in all of this, when they're learning about government, to be able to vote."

Pelosi's comments Thursday echoed those she has made previously, including in a 2015 New York Times interview in which the Speaker said she was "all for" lowering the voting age.

Pelosi told the Times that she wanted to expand voter access to 16 and 17- year-olds "because when kids are in school, they're so interested, they're so engaged."

The California congresswoman supported a local ballot initiative in her home district of San Francisco in 2016 that would have lowered the voting age in municipal elections to 16, known as Proposition F, but the measure was defeated by single digits at the ballot box.

Members of Congress voted down an amendment to the Democrats' voting rights bill last Thursday that sought to lower the federal voting age to 16, an effort led by freshman Rep. Ayanna Pressley (D-Mass.). Almost 130 lawmakers voted in favor of the amendment, which was described by advocates as a first of its kind proposal to make it to the House floor.

"Only a couple years ago, just one Member of Congress expressing interest in 16-year-old voting was a huge deal, so to see 126 members vote yes on Rep. Pressley's amendment is a thrilling sign of how far we've come in a short time, and a testament to the fact that support for this issue consistently increases as decision makers are educated about it," advocacy group Vote16USA said in a press release. "We are excited to build on this momentum and we're optimistic that one day 16-year-old voting will be the norm in the United States," the statement added.

SB-4

Submitted on: 2/5/2020 9:16:04 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/7/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Imiloa Borland	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am unable to attend the hearing as I have school. I support this bill because 16 year olds are capable and intelligent, and can responsibly make decisions that effect their lives.

SB-4

Submitted on: 2/3/2020 5:45:32 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/7/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dara Carlin, M.A.	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

No, just no. If you don't have children, ask someone who does - the answer is no.

SB-4

Submitted on: 2/5/2020 1:15:17 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/7/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Scott Foster	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Mahalo for your support on SB4.

Sincerely,

Scott Foster

Communications Director

Hawaii Advocates For Consumer Rights

SB-4

Submitted on: 2/5/2020 11:31:35 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/7/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ann S Freed	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SB-4

Submitted on: 2/5/2020 7:32:22 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/7/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Michael Golojuch Jr	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SB-4

Submitted on: 2/5/2020 2:22:13 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/7/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Leimomi Khan	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Support. I have nieces who are at this age who are engaged in civics and social justice. In round table family discussions, they exhibit understanding of the issues and often can articulate good reasoning even better than their adult family members. We also saw the passion of young people marching to stop gun violence at our nation's schools. Can they make good choices as voters...I have every confidence that they can, especially knowing the impact that such elected officials have on their lives, with legislation on tuition waivers, health coverage, housing for young adults, etc. Allowing sixteen-year old youth to vote will build our vibrant democracy and allow our democratic system to thrive since it is highly likely that they will continue to vote in their older years.

SB-4

Submitted on: 2/6/2020 6:47:53 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/7/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Caroline Kunitake	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee on Judiciary,

I am writing in support of SB4, which proposes a constitutional amendment to lower the qualifying age of voters for any state or local election to sixteen years of age.

Studies have shown that voting is a habit, which develop over repetition and can become strongly ingrained if developed early. SB 4 will allow people to vote starting at age sixteen. If we trust people to be behind the wheel of an automobile at age sixteen, we should trust them with a ballot. SB 4 is an important bill to allow young people to vote and continue to vote their entire lives, leading to a strong and vibrant democracy. "We do not have government by the majority. We have government by the majority who participate." Thomas Jefferson.

Please pass SB4.

Mahalo,

Caroline Kunitake

SB-4

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 11:11:43 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/7/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ezra Levinson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Ezra Levinson. I am a 15-year-old student at Punahou School. I have been an avid supporter of lowering the voting age for the past several years, but I could not be here today due to my school schedule. Lowering the voting age to 16 makes sense. In our society, teens are increasingly exposed to huge amounts of information. In fact, I'm fairly certain that due to social media and the Internet, my peers and I are more informed about current events than most people who have reached the current voting age. Combined with other factors you're likely aware of, this leads me to believe that there's no reason to leave the voting age at 18 years old. I sincerely hope you feel the same way.

SB-4

Submitted on: 2/5/2020 8:13:14 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/7/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Christine Mau	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I'm currently a 17 year old student at Punahou, and I wish I had the chance to view during the 2018 midterm elections. As a freshman and a sophomore, I had (and still do have) so many opinions on the political climate of our state and country. But, due to the voting age limit I was unable to actively make a difference besides spreading awareness on topics I was passionate about. My friends and I also discussed the absurdity of being able to learn how to drive independently (aka handling heavy machinery) before being able to have a say in the government that monitors our lives. Please do consider passing this bill, there are so many teenagers like myself who want to participate in our society.

SB-4

Submitted on: 2/5/2020 9:32:59 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/7/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Younghi Overly	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Karl Rhoads
Vice Chair Jarrett Keohokalole
Senate Committee on Judiciary

Friday, February 7, 2020
10:00 AM

**TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB4 PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO
THE HAWAII STATE CONSTITUTION TO AMEND THE QUALIFYING AGE OF
VOTERS FOR ANY STATE OR LOCAL ELECTION.**

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Keohokalole, Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary,

My name is Jun Shin. I am a Sophomore at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. I am testifying in **strong support** of **SB4**, proposing an amendment to the Hawaii State Constitution to amend the qualifying age of voters for any state or local election. This measure would propose a constitutional amendment to lower the qualifying age of voters for any state or local election to sixteen years of age.

As someone who was 16 just a couple years ago (I'm 20 now), I definitely supported this when I first got involved in advocacy and still am in strong support of it now. At the age of 16, my classmates and I were thinking about college. From the FASFA and financial aid, to the SAT's, to questions on paying for college, these considerations were inherently political.

Even looking at our state in general, 16 year olds are already legally in a position to do a lot. Our current consent age is 16 years old. With proper permission, you can get married at 16. At 16, you can get a provisional licence. Doing taxes is not limited to age as well, so working 16 year olds can do their own individual taxes as well. With there being 16 year olds already taking on or having the potential to take on what can be perceived as "adult responsibilities", my personal thought on this matter is, why not the vote?

It definitely needs to be taken into consideration that if we expand the pool of democracy to the future with better civic education, voter drives, community outreach, and organizing efforts, we could help in increasing our voter turnout while empowering our next generation of leaders to get involved. Having the domino effect of encouraging their friends and family to get involved as well. I **strongly support SB4** and request for it to be passed through your committee. Young people are our future, let's include them at the decision making table.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify,

Jun Shin
1561 Kanunu St.
Honolulu, HI 96814
Cell: 808-255-6663
Email: junshinbusiness729@gmail.com

SB-4

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 7:56:18 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/7/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Gerard Silva	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

The proposal should be to raise the Age to 21 not to lower it we would not allow our kids to Vote until they know about the system and how it works. The schools now are only teaching Comunistum the the Hawaii people are feed up with this Crap.

SB-4

Submitted on: 2/5/2020 9:41:59 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/7/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
tlaloc tokuda	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

i support this bill

Senator Stanley Chang, Vice Chair

Senator Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Judiciary

LATE

Shanelle Acain, Individual

1396 Akamai Street

Kailua, HI 96734

(808) 354-7631

Date: Friday, February 7, 2020

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Place: Conference Room 016

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

Oppose for SB 4, Relating to proposing an amendment to the hawaii state constitution to amend the qualifying age of voters for any state or local election.

Aloha Senators and Committee I am in opposition of the constitution being amended to lower the qualifying age of voters to 16 years of age. I do not feel that our education system is well equipped enough to prepare our young to vote the way that they should. When voting, it's important to vote for the candidate that has the same values, passions and vision as yourself. It's important to look at each candidate that is running because when you vote you'll need to complete the whole ballot. Not only is it important to learn about each candidate but it's also very important to know about the issues that are pertinent around this time and how each candidate would like to address each issue. Are they aligned with your beliefs?

I am in opposition of SB 4 because I do not feel that our education system is designed well enough or equipped to prepare our youth for such a task at the age of 16. I agree that they should begin to educate them on voting but do not feel that they will be ready.

Sincerely,

Shanelle Acain

LATE

SB-4

Submitted on: 2/6/2020 9:40:04 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/7/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Makena Nagasako	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha nā• ,

My name is Makena Nagasako, and I am a 17-year-old senior at Kamehameha Schools Maui. I am a resident and future voter in S District 5.

I am writing in SUPPORT of SB 4, which would lower the voting age to allow 16 and 17-year-olds to vote in local and state elections.

Even someone as young as I am can appreciate the hard work and dedication of our state's legislators. I believe that those currently in office were elected to fulfill certain goals or obligations to ensure the betterment of Hawai'i. However, there is a large intergenerational disconnect between the experienced adults who run the state, and the young adults whose lives are being affected by men and women who do not truly understand our viewpoints. When decisions are made about education, they are made without the consultation of the actual stakeholders, the students! Students should be able to vote for politicians who will fight for us, figuratively and literally. Many of us already have jobs, pay taxes, and are even tried as adults in certain cases, but we do not have a say or voice in a process that is supposed to be of the people, by the people, and for the people. As teenagers, we believe that we represent a huge voting bloc of students whose interests should be represented.

In order to create a civically engaged population that cares about the wellbeing of this state and its people, we need to allow voting in 16 and 17-year olds. I want to vote because I believe my opinion matters, and I have always believed in the legislative process, but we are not being heard. The best way for us to send our message would be to allow us to vote.

Mahalo nui loa for your support and consideration,

Makena Nagasako

406 Molokai Hema St.

Kahului, HI 96732

LATE

SB-4

Submitted on: 2/6/2020 10:20:52 PM
Testimony for JDC on 2/7/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Justin Li	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Senators,

My name is Justin Li, and I am an 18-year-old senior in high school. Over the course of my high school education, I have observed the way teachers, parents, and other adults notice the shift in the way our society gains knowledge. Generation Z is the first group of individuals to be raised on the internet and social media platforms. With resources at their fingertips, students have the ability to educate themselves further in a shorter span of time. With the unlimited possibilities of the internet at their disposal, teens have the ability to obtain knowledge on nearly any subject. I ask for Amendment SB4 to be passed for the reason that 16-year-olds today are now educated to make decisions to move the world forward.

Teens today have access to so much information that often times they do not have a set interest yet. However, with access to education, they have a broader less biased perspective compared to an established professional with a specific interest. In our society today, an unbiased approach to issues is crucial as interests influence decisions that in the end may not be beneficial to others. Generation Z has proven that age does not have to be a factor when measuring capability. There are many individuals below the age of 18 that have made a large impact than those above the age requirement. For this reason, those under the age of 18 should not have their opinions automatically discounted on the sole basis of a number. The youth of today should be included in making decisions as they are the rising leaders for the upcoming decade. That being the case, society must do everything within its power to prepare them for this role.

Voting participation is getting worse every year. A democratic country is a system that relies on the opinions of those that are educated. By choice, many people have decided to opt-out, causing under-representation for certain groups. A community cannot expect to function efficiently and make choices that are beneficial to all that are affected without a holistic representation. By increasing the availability of voting to younger citizens voting participation will increase.

For the reasons listed above, I strongly support amendment SB4 and humbly ask senators reading this testimony to seriously consider how beneficial it would be for our society as a whole.

Sincerely,

Justin Li