



Young Progressives Demanding Action
P.O. Box 11105
Honolulu, HI 96828

February 19, 2020
10:00 AM

TO: Senate Committee on Ways & Means
RE: Testimony in Support of SB4

Dear Senators,

Young Progressives Demanding Action (YPDA) advocates for public policies that reflect the values of young people throughout the State of Hawai'i. One of those values is that a democracy works when people are able to participate in the process of designing the policies and laws that they will adhere to and be governed by.

YPDA **supports** SB4. SB4 would propose an amendment to the Hawai'i 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.

Currently in the State of Hawai'i, 16 year olds are in a legal position to take on a lot of responsibilities if they chose to do so. The current consent age is 16 years old and with proper permission, you could get married at 16. Taxes are 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", why is suffrage not one of them?

It definitely needs to be taken into consideration that if we expand the pool of democracy to include 16 year olds 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 turnout and get involved.

We must make sure that we provide access to democracy for groups who struggle to find time to engage with the process. We lose out as a society when potential solutions to our

problems are not heard. We lose out as a society when apathy keeps people from participating.

Young Progressives Demanding Action **supports** SB4.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify,

Jun Shin,
Executive Committee Member
Young Progressives Demanding Action (YPDA)
Cell: 808-255-6663
Email: junshinbusiness729@gmail.com
CC: action@ypdahawaii.org



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

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Wednesday, February 19th, 2020, 10:00 a.m., Room 211
SB 4, PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO THE HAWAII STATE CONSTITUTION TO AMEND
THE QUALIFYING AGE OF VOTERS FOR ANY STATE OR LOCAL ELECTION

TESTIMONY

D. Piilani Kaopuiki, President, League of Women Voters of Hawaii

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Keith-Agaran, and Committee Members:

Lowering the state's voting age to 16 is a topic of interest to the League. The League does not oppose this proposal, but we have declined to subject this topic to the rigorous program of study we undertake in order to form an official position. This year, we have instead focused our efforts on passing Automatic Voter Registration and providing voter education resources. These priorities are motivated by the League's goal of increasing voter turnout.

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 shares an interest in these outcomes.

However, our recent experience with voter roll maintenance practices, as headlines are made by them across the country, informs us that this policy is not without risk. Should this amendment pass, the County Clerks and Office of Elections must find a way to manage what would become two lists of voters: those voting in federal elections and those voting in state and local elections. Unless the County Clerks and Office of Elections are given the time and resources to construct and train their staffs on such a system, there is a risk that some voters could get disenfranchised by being put on one roll, but not the other. Such disenfranchisement would outweigh the potential benefits of expanding our electorate.

We will continue to monitor efforts across the country to lower the voting age at all levels of government. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.



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

-
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.

Hawaii
*Holding Power Accountable*Statement Before The
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANSWednesday, February 19, 2020
10:00 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 211

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 DELA CRUZ, Vice Chair KEITH-AGARAN, and Members of the Senate Ways and Means 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.

Lowering the voting age to 16 will not be unique. A few cities have lowered the voting age to 16 -- Takoma Park, Hyattsville, and Greenbelt all in Maryland. Berkeley, California permits 16-year-olds vote in school board elections. The countries of Brazil and Austria permit 16-year-olds to vote. See <https://www.vox.com/future-perfect/2019/9/10/20835327/voting-age-youth-rights-kids-vote>.

As for concerns regarding the costs associated with implementation of SB 4, Common Cause Hawaii defers to the State Office of Elections and the County Clerks' Offices estimates. Common Cause Hawaii, however, does note that, under Hawaii Revised Statutes § 11-12(b), the pre-registering of 16-year-olds to vote is permitted. Therefore, this may be used as a template roll / list, once SB 4 is adopted. Also, as Hawaii will be voting by mail, pursuant to Act 136, Session Laws of Hawaii, voting instructions can and should include clear directions to qualified 16-18 year olds that they may only vote in state and local elections. Therefore, no special ballots will need to be printed and no extra costs should have to be incurred for ballots.

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



Luna O Na Papa Alakai

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Pelekikena
A. Makana Paris

Friday, February 19, 2020
10:00 am Conference Room 211

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 Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran:

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

Pelekikena Hala
Koke
Yvonne 'PeeWee'
Ryan

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.

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

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.

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

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

Me ke aloha,

www.pkhcc.org

A. Makana Paris
Pelekikena
president@pkhcc.org

Founded in 1964
by Liliuokalani
Kawananakoa Morris

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE ON PRISONS

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

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



COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Sen. Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair

Sen. Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

Wednesday, February 19, 2020

10:00 am – Room 211

SUPPORT for SB 4 - VOTING RIGHTS FOR 16 YEAR OLDS

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran 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 **JAMES BORLING SALAS, 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 eleven (11) people that we know of, who have died in the last six (6) months. We also remind the committee of 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.

Community Alliance on Prisons supports SB 4 to amend the constitution to lower the qualifying age of voters for any state or local election to sixteen years of age. An article¹ about lowering the voting age talked about the objection (83%) to lower the voting age to 18 in 1939! Vietnam changed that when states lowered the voting age in their state and local elections to 18. The 26th Amendment, changing the national voting age from 21 to 18 passed in 1971; it took over 50 years to happen, led by states first lowering the voting age to 18 on their own.

Hawai`i's 16-year-old students have shown us amazing concern for social and environmental issues in their organizing marches and rallies for gun control, climate change. They have the energy, they are innovative, and **THEY CARE!** Engaging them is vital to our democracy. They are already raising their voices. We hear them. Do you hear them?

Granting 16-year-olds the right to vote in state and local elections is a great way to engage our youth. My Mom used to say, "*Democracy demands participation*" and she was right. This will increase our voter turnout in state and local elections, give our youth a voice in their future, and it will make our democracy stronger.

Community Alliance on Prisons urges this committee to pass SB 4. Voting is a habit and practicing democracy as a habit will increase our pathetic voter turnout numbers.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.

¹ This is why 16-year-olds should be able to vote, By Scott Warren, March 2, 2019 | 9:17am
<https://nypost.com/2019/03/02/this-is-why-16-year-olds-should-be-able-to-vote/>



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 HAWAI'I O KAPOLEI
LANCE HOLDEN

ALI'I PAUAHI HCC
KEHAULANI LUM

'EWA-PU'U'LOA 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'OLAULOA 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'ANAE HCC
CYNTHIA ENRIQUEZ

WAIKIKI HCC
L. PI'IKEA TOMCZYK

HCC OF WAIMĀNALO
KALANI KALIMA

Ka 'Aha Kenekoa
Committee on Ways and Means

Pō'alima, Pepeluali 19, 2020

Lumi 'Aha Kūkā 211
Ke Kapikala Moku'āina
415 South Beretania Street

Re: SB4 - Relating to Voting

Aloha Luna Ho'omalua Donovan Dela Cruz, Hope Luna Ho'omalua Gilber Keith-Agaran, and members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means.

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.





Ka 'Aha Kenekoa
Committee on Ways and Means

Pō 'alima, Pepeluali 19, 2020
Lumi 'Aha Kūkā 211
Ke Kapikala Moku 'āina
415 South Beretānia Street

Re: SB4 - Relating to Voting

Aloha Luna Ho 'omalu Donovan Dela Cruz, *Hope Luna Ho 'omalu* Gilbert Keith-Agaran, and members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means.

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.

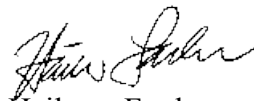
Hawai'i faces a crisis of civic engagement and we consistently rank last in the nation in voter turnout. Voting is a habit and a person's first election is critical to establishing that habit. In fact, voting in one election can increase the probability that a person will vote in the next election by 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 MANOKALANIPO
THE KAUA'I COUNCIL OF THE ASSOCIATION OF HAWAIIAN CIVIC CLUBS

LATE

Date: Peleluali 18, 2020

To: Ka 'Aha Kenekoa- Committee on Ways and Means

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 Donovan Dela Cruz, Hope Luna Ho'omalua Gilbert Keith-Agaran, and members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means.

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.

SB-4

Submitted on: 2/15/2020 5:01:13 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Dear Chair Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee on Ways and Means,

I am writing in support of SB4.

- 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.
- Lowering the voting age to 16 will not be unique. A few cities have lowered the voting age to 16 -- Takoma Park, Hyattsville, and Greenbelt all in Maryland. Berkeley, California permits 16-year-olds vote in school board elections. The countries of Brazil and Austria permit 16 years to vote. See <https://www.vox.com/future-perfect/2019/9/10/20835327/voting-age-youth-rights-kids-vote>.
- As for concerns regarding the costs associated with implementation of SB 4, Common Cause Hawaii defers to the State Office of Elections and the County Clerks' Offices estimates. Common Cause Hawaii, however, does note that, under Hawaii Revised Statutes § 11-12(b), the pre-registering of 16 year olds to vote is permitted. Therefore, this may be used as a template roll / list, once SB 4 is adopted. Also, as Hawaii will be voting by mail, pursuant to Act 136, Session Laws of Hawaii, voting instructions can and should include clear directions to qualified 16-18 year olds that they may only vote in state and local elections. Therefore, no special ballots will need to be printed and no extra costs should have to be incurred for ballots.

Please pass this bill.

Mahalo,

Caroline Kunitake

February 15, 2020

TO: Senate Ways and Means Committee

RE: **SB 4**



As a parent, I support lowering the voting age to 16 for all elections.

According to an article in the New York Times, Dr. Laurence Steinberg, a leading expert on brain development, called for the federal voting age to be lowered from 18 to 16. Dr. Steinberg claims 16-year-olds have the intellectual capacity to vote. For example, in a calm situation, when you are by yourself and have time to deliberate and when the most important skill is the ability to reason logically with facts, 16-year-olds have the necessary cognitive skills. Voting is a good example of this, it is similar to taking a test.

Students in Hawaii are studying civics and democracy in school. In order to graduate, DOE requires a course in US History and Government, Modern History of Hawaii and Participation in a Democracy.

Social Studies	4 credits including: U.S. History and Government (1.0 credit); and World History and Culture (1.0 credit); and Modern History of Hawaii (0.5 credit); and Participation in a Democracy (0.5 credit); and Social Studies basic elective (1.0 credit)
----------------	--

About one third of Hawaii public high school students took the Advanced Placement Exams that allow them to earn early college credit. These are highly motivated students who we want as new voters. In 2018, Hawaii’s public and private high school students took a total of 8,478 Advanced Placement Exams.

Our 16-year-olds have the cognitive ability to take the **SAT** and **ACT** exams, demonstrating 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 state to give voting rights to its 16 year-old citizens and allow them full participation in our democracy.

Our State of Hawaii can only benefit with SB4.

Mahalo

Gloria Borland
Honolulu

Parent Volunteer, Vote 16

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. 3/14/19

This year, we anticipate the US Congress will again take action to lower the voting age to 16 for federal elections.

SB-4

Submitted on: 2/16/2020 8:26:15 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha!

My name is Ezra Levinson. I am a 15-year-old freshman at Punahou School, and I wholeheartedly support SB4.

The world has changed since the voting age was set at 18 years old. The evolution of the Internet, and subsequently social media, has ensured that each new generation of teens is more "plugged in" than the one that came before. I think it's clear that teenagers today are aware of what's going on in the world around us - long before we turn 18.

It is also important to recognize that the voting age in Hawaii has been lowered multiple times. The threshold was 20 years old in 1968, until it was lowered to 18 nationwide by the 26th Amendment in 1971. Adjustments to the voting age are not unheard of. This is not new territory.

In fact, lowering the voting age is on the nation's radar because of Andrew Yang, the former presidential candidate, who proposed a national reduction of the voting age to 16 years old. His core argument was simple: "At 16, Americans don't have hourly limits imposed on their work, and they pay taxes. Their livelihoods are directly impacted by legislation, and they should therefore be allowed to vote for their representatives." He also made several other arguments which, while framed on a national level, are relevant to our own situation regarding state and local elections. They can be viewed at [this link](#).

In short, lowering the voting age to 16 years old for state and local elections is a surefire and relatively easy way to increase voter turnout, educate our youth about civic engagement, and ensure that as much of the population as possible is fairly represented in our state legislature. I hope you will come to the same conclusion I have regarding this bill: It ought to be passed.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

With sincerity,

Ezra Levinson

SB-4

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 5:53:50 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Steven Costa	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SB-4

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 6:25:22 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

I am a high school senior, and I believe that the State's voting age should be lowered to 16 years old. High school students are already expected to have enough critical thinking skills to drive, work, pay taxes, and take standardized tests such as the SAT and ACT. Hawaii has the nation's lowest voter turnout. By growing the population of those who can participate in our democracy, we as a society become a stronger and more diverse democracy.

SB-4

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 6:54:21 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Alan B Burdick	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support a State Constitutional amendment that would allow persons age 16 years or older to vote in State and county elections. I believe that most teenagers at this age level are as fit to vote as persons who are older.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Alan B. Burdick, Aiea.

SB-4

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 8:26:48 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Susan Dursin	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please support this constitutional amendment allowing 16-year-olds to vote in state and local elections. Having pre-registered students of this age many times, I can vouch for the fact that they are eager to reach the what they see as the gateway to adulthood. Often, they ask questions that many older voters do not even consider. I believe they are at a formative time in their lives and they can do as well as many adults do to learn about candidates and issues and make informed decisions. If this policy were in place, it might also foster more civics education in high schools.

Susan Dursin, Captain Cook

SB-4

Submitted on: 2/17/2020 12:00:31 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lena Mochimaru	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

More and more young people are taking matters into their own hands on how their future should be . They are teaching us what is important and what mistakes we have made that needs to be changed. Hawaii has a very low voter turn out, this will shift the focus and revitalize current political climate in Hawaii.

SB-4

Submitted on: 2/18/2020 9:49:39 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2020 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments: