

MAR 11 2022

---

## SENATE RESOLUTION

---

REQUESTING THE OFFICE OF ELECTIONS TO ESTABLISH A WORKING GROUP  
TO CONDUCT A STUDY ON THE IMPLICATIONS OF CHANGING THE  
MINIMUM VOTING AGE IN HAWAII TO EXPAND VOTER PARTICIPATION.

1 WHEREAS, Hawaii once boasted the highest voter  
2 participation in the United States during the early years of  
3 statehood; and  
4

5 WHEREAS, in 1971, the minimum voting age in Hawaii was  
6 changed from twenty to eighteen years of age; and  
7

8 WHEREAS, since 1971, the young people of Hawaii have been  
9 given more responsibility in the labor workforce, paying of  
10 taxes, and driving a car, all before the right to vote; and  
11

12 WHEREAS, in recent years, Hawaii's voter turnout has been  
13 the lowest in the United States for the presidential elections  
14 between 2008 and 2016, where voter turnout dropped from forty-  
15 nine percent to 42.5 percent in 2016; and  
16

17 WHEREAS, the enactment of Act 136, Session Laws of Hawaii  
18 2019, which requires all state elections to be conducted by  
19 mail, was intended to increase voter turnout and accessibility;  
20 and  
21

22 WHEREAS, in the first all-mail-in ballot election in the  
23 State, there was a record turnout of 69.6 percent, or 579,784  
24 registered voters, who participated in the 2020 general  
25 election; and  
26

27 WHEREAS, despite the significant turnout in the 2020  
28 general election, 30.4 percent, or 252,682 registered voters,  
29 did not cast a ballot for the 2020 general election; and  
30

31 WHEREAS, just as many adults are unprepared to make  
32 informed decisions to vote, many younger citizens are prepared  
33 to participate but are unable to engage in the process; and  
34



1 WHEREAS, expanding the voting population to include Hawaii  
2 residents who may be younger than eighteen years old may address  
3 some of the longstanding issues with Hawaii's historically low  
4 voter turnout; now, therefore,

5  
6 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-first  
7 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2022,  
8 that the Office of Elections is requested to establish a working  
9 group to study the implications of changing the minimum voting  
10 age to increase voter participation; and

11  
12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested  
13 to address the following issues:

- 14  
15 (1) The pros and cons of a lower voting age;  
16  
17 (2) The experiences of countries, states, and  
18 municipalities that have changed the minimum voting  
19 age below eighteen years old;  
20  
21 (3) Whether a changed voting age should apply to all  
22 elections conducted in the State or only to certain  
23 elections; and  
24  
25 (4) Necessary processes and considerations, if any, on  
26 changing the minimum voting age in Hawaii; and  
27

28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested  
29 to include the following members:

- 30  
31 (1) The Chief Election Officer, who shall serve as the  
32 chair;  
33  
34 (2) The Dean of the William S. Richardson School of Law,  
35 University of Hawaii;  
36  
37 (3) The Superintendent of the Department of Education; and  
38  
39 (4) At least one member of the community representing an  
40 organization that promotes civic engagement, expanded  
41 voting rights, and good government; and  
42



1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the chairperson of the working  
2 group is requested to invite student representatives from public  
3 and private schools across the State; and  
4

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested  
6 to submit a report on its findings, recommendations, and  
7 proposed legislation, if necessary, to the Legislature no later  
8 than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session  
9 of 2023; and  
10

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
12 Resolution be transmitted to the Chief Election Officer; Dean of  
13 the William S. Richardson School of Law, University of Hawaii;  
14 and Superintendent of the Department of Education.  
15  
16  
17

OFFERED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

