

*Before the Board of Supervisors in and for the
County of Monterey, State of California*

Resolution No.

Resolution supporting the concept of lowering the legal voting age in California to sixteen.

WHEREAS, Upon turning 16, young people can drive, work without limitations on hours, pay taxes, take classes on government in school, are subject to adult criminal charges, and yet are denied the right to vote; and

WHEREAS, Young people often feel excluded from being engaged in their government and are underrepresented in local government; and

WHEREAS, On September 15, 2014, the United Nations declared 2014's International Day of Democracy theme to be "Engaging Young People on Democracy," calling for countries around the world to increase their efforts to engage young people in their democratic processes; and

WHEREAS, Extending voting rights to youth of 16-years of age would empower young people to become engaged in our local government; and

WHEREAS, With the right to vote, young people would increase their knowledge and interest in politics and the issues directly affecting them; and

WHEREAS, 16-year olds possess roughly the same political knowledge as 21-year olds and come close to the average for all adults; and

WHEREAS, Young people who vote will make voting habitual, as voting is a life-long practice begun once one casts their first vote; and

WHEREAS, Young voters will be more likely to continue civic engagement throughout their lives than are those who begin voting later in life; and

WHEREAS, Studies have proven 16-year old voters are competent and mature enough to make well-informed decisions that will influence their lives and the broader electorate; and

WHEREAS, Given the current age demographics in Monterey County, where the median age of the population is 34 years old and lower in cities like Salinas, where the median age is 30, expanding the electorate is essential to empowering our County's young population; and

WHEREAS, Numerous countries – Austria, Argentina, Brazil, Germany, Norway and the United Kingdom – have extended the right to vote to 16 year olds in national, state, and local elections or are considering doing so, and these efforts have resulted in higher turnout among voters age 16-17 than among voters age 18 and older; and

WHEREAS, In December 2010, the Lowell, Massachusetts City Council passed a resolution petitioning the Massachusetts State Legislature to lower the city's voting age to 17 and the petition is currently being considered by the Massachusetts State Legislature where it has garnered the support of several state lawmakers; and

WHEREAS, In May 2013, Takoma Park, Maryland became the first municipality in the United States to reduce its legal voting age to 16-years of age; and

WHEREAS, Voter turnout among these newly enfranchised voters in Takoma Park was 44 percent, as compared to the overall voter turnout which was 11 percent; and

WHEREAS, The Oregon legislature and Governor Kate Brown approved a state ballot measure to lower the voting age to 16; and

WHEREAS, The City of Berkeley became the first local government in November 2016 to lower the voting age 16 for its School Board elections; and

WHEREAS, The Scottish government allowed 16 and 17-year olds to vote in its referendum on declaring independence from the United Kingdom; and

WHEREAS, These 16 and 17-year old voters used this opportunity to exercise their newfound right to vote en masse, with over 90 percent of 16 and 17-year old voters registering to vote in the Scottish independence referendum; and

WHEREAS, Research consistently indicates 16-17 year olds make voting decisions based on reasoned consideration of their own and larger interests in a fashion similar to older voters; and

WHEREAS, The Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Trustees voted on April 23, 2019, to study extending voting at 16 for its School Board elections; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Monterey County Board of Supervisors officially supports the concept of extending voting to 16 and 17 year old citizens in local, state and federal elections and urges the California Legislature to extend enfranchisement to California's youth.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the County Administrative Office transmit copies of this resolution to California Governor Gavin Newsom, U.S. Senators Diane Feinstein and Kamala Harris, Congressman Jimmy Panetta, Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon, Senate President Pro Tem Toni Atkins, State Senators Bill Monning and Anna Caballero and Assemblymembers Mark Stone and Robert Rivas.

PASSED AND ADOPTED on this ____ day of ____, by the following vote, to-wit:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

I, Valerie Ralph, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Monterey, State of California, hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of an original order of said Board of Supervisors duly made and entered in the minutes thereof of Minute Book ____ for the meeting on _____.

Dated:

Valerie Ralph, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
County of Monterey, State of California
