A BILL FOR AN ACT

PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO THE HAWAII CONSTITUTION, ARTICLE II, SECTION 1, TO EXPAND THE RIGHT TO VOTE.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

- 1 SECTION 1. The purpose of this Act is to propose an
- 2 amendment to article II, section 1, of the Constitution of the
- 3 State of Hawaii to expand the right to vote.
- 4 The legislature finds that voter turnout remains low in
- 5 Hawaii, and continues to decline. In 2016, Hawaii had the
- 6 lowest voter turnout in the United States. Only 52.6 per cent
- 7 of registered Hawaii voters cast ballots in the 2018 general
- 8 election. This represents a sharp decline in voter turnout over
- 9 the years, as approximately ninety-three per cent of registered
- 10 voters cast ballots in Hawaii's first gubernatorial election in
- 11 1959.
- 12 The legislature further finds that voting is the
- 13 cornerstone of American democracy. Expanding the right to vote
- 14 to those sixteen years of age and older will not only increase
- 15 voter turnout, but will encourage civic engagement at a young
- 16 age.



H.B. NO. 1280

1	The legislature finds there are many sixteen- and
2	seventeen-year-olds who are passionate about voting and would
3	like to vote. In 2018, thirty-one per cent of qualified voters
4	in the United States between the ages of eighteen and twenty-
5	nine voted. This represents a ten per cent increase in voter
6	turnout for voters between the ages of eighteen and twenty-nine
7	from the 2016 election.
8	The legislature finds that voting at a young age creates
9	and empowers lifelong voters. Data shows that after an
10	individual votes once, he or she becomes a habitual voter.
11	Therefore, expanding voter rights to those sixteen years of age
12	and older will empower a new generation of lifelong voters.
13	SECTION 2. Article 2, section 1, of the Constitution of
14	the State of Hawaii is amended to read as follows:
15	"QUALIFICATIONS
16	Section 1. Every citizen of the United States who shall
17	have attained the age of [eighteen] sixteen years, have been a
18	resident of this State not less than one year next preceding the

election and be a voter registered as provided by law, shall be

qualified to vote in any state or local election."

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H.B. NO. 1280

- 1 SECTION 3. The question to be printed on the ballot shall
- 2 be as follows:
- 3 "Shall voting rights for state and local elections be
- 4 expanded to those who are sixteen years of age or older?"
- 5 SECTION 4. Constitutional material to be repealed is
- 6 bracketed and stricken. New constitutional material is
- 7 underscored.
- 8 SECTION 5. This amendment shall take effect upon
- 9 compliance with article XVII, section 3, of the Constitution of
- 10 the State of Hawaii.

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INTRODUCED BY:

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Ridd hope

HB HMS 2019-1385-1

JAN 2 3 2019

H.B. NO. 1280

Report Title:

Voting; Hawaii Constitution; Amendment

Description:

Lowers the right to vote in state and local elections to those who are sixteen years of age or older per the Hawaii Constitution.

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