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S. WARD
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2017-2018 #168 - Amended

Colorado Secretary of State

LOWER VOTING AGE REQUIREMENT FOR LOCAL AND STATE ELECTIONS

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Colorado:

SECTION 1. In the constitution of the state of Colorado, amend section 1 of article VII as follows:

Section 1. Qualifications of elector.

- (1) Every resident of the ~~United States~~ STATE OF COLORADO who has attained the age of ~~eighteen~~ SIXTEEN years, has resided in this state for such time as may be prescribed by law, and has been duly registered as a voter if required by law shall be qualified to vote at all LOCAL AND STATE elections.
- (2) THE DISENFRANCHISED SIXTEEN-YEAR-OLD AND SEVENTEEN-YEAR-OLD RESIDENTS OF COLORADO WANT AND DESERVE TO BE INCLUDED IN THE STRENGTHENING OF OUR DEMOCRACY, TO HAVE THEIR DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES, CIVIC PASSIONS AND PERSONAL BELIEFS HEEDED BY OUR STATE LEGISLATURE, AND TO BEGIN THE HABIT AND DUTY OF VOTING AT LOCAL AND STATE ELECTIONS DURING THE SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT OF HOME AND HIGH SCHOOL BEFORE NAVIGATING THE HURDLES OF CONTINUING THEIR EDUCATION IN COLLEGE OR JOINING THE WORKFORCE.
- (3) THE PEOPLE OF COLORADO MUST TAKE INTO THE ACCOUNT THE CHANGING TIMES IN WHICH WE LIVE AND LOWER THE VOTING AGE QUALIFICATION OF ELECTORS TO REFLECT THE EVOLUTION OF OUR SOCIETY, A SOCIETY THAT IN 1920 ENACTED THE NINETEENTH AMENDMENT THAT ALLOWED WOMEN TO VOTE, A SOCIETY ROCKED SO FERVENTLY BY VIETNAM WAR PROTESTS THAT IN 1971 THE TWENTY-SIXTH AMENDMENT WAS ENACTED TO LOWER THE VOTING AGE REQUIREMENT FROM TWENTY-ONE-YEAR-OLD TO EIGHTEEN-YEAR-OLD, A SOCIETY THAT IN 2018 IS SO EMBROILED WITHIN OUR BORDERS THAT THE DISENFRANCHISED YOUTH, THE VERY YOUTH WE HAVE RAISED TO BE EMPOWERED AND TO ENGAGE SOCIAL INJUSTICES WITH EMPATHY, ARE BEING CALLED UPON LIKE THE SUFFRAGISTS AND THE STUDENT ACTIVISTS OF THE PAST TO TAKE A STAND FOR THE GREATER GOOD OF OUR PEOPLE.
- (4) INCIDENTALLY, TWO OF THE MOST NOTABLE INSTANCES OF MUCH NEEDED CHANGE TO OUR QUALIFICATIONS OF ELECTOR CAME ABOUT IN ROUGHLY FIFTY-YEAR INCREMENTS. WE FAST APPROACH THE NEXT FIFTY-YEAR MILESTONE OF 2020.
- (5) ALTHOUGH THE TWENTY-SIXTH AMENDMENT EMPOWERS CONGRESS TO UPHOLD EIGHTEEN-YEAR-OLD AS THE MINIMUM VOTING AGE REQUIREMENT FOR FEDERAL ELECTIONS, THE SUPREME COURT'S DECISION IN 1970, OREGON V. MITCHELL, 400 U.S. 112, HELD THAT THE STATES HAVE THE POWER TO SET QUALIFICATIONS TO VOTE IN STATE AND LOCAL ELECTIONS.
- (6) IN COLORADO IT IS LEGAL FOR SIXTEEN-YEAR-OLDS TO:
 - a) DRIVE A MOTOR VEHICLE
 - b) HAVE AN OCCUPATION WHICH INVOLVES THE USE OF A MOTOR VEHICLE IF THE MINOR IS LICENSED TO OPERATE THE MOTOR VEHICLE.
 - c) WORK IN ANY NON-HAZARDOUS OCCUPATION.
 - d) WORK FOR ANY NUMBER OF HOURS AT ANY TIME OF THE DAY.

e) GET MARRIED WITH THE CONSENT OF BOTH PARENTS OR GUARDIANS OR COURT APPROVAL.

(7) IN THE UNITED STATES MILITARY, SEVENTEEN-YEAR-OLDS MAY ENLIST INTO ANY BRANCH WITH PARENTAL CONSENT.

Proponents for initiative 2017-2018 #168:

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