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2017-2018 #168 – Original

**LOWER AGE QUALIFICATION OF ELECTOR**

Colorado Secretary of State

*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**

Every citizen of the STATE OF COLORADO ~~United States~~ who has attained the age of SIXTEEN ~~eighteen~~ 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.

**(1) DECLARATION OF THE VOTERS OF COLORADO.**

(a) THE DISENFRANCHISED SIXTEEN-YEAR-OLD AND SEVENTEEN-YEAR-OLD CITIZENS OF COLORADO WANT AND DESERVE TO BE INCLUDED IN THE STRENGTHENING OF OUR DEMOCRACY, TO HAVE THEIR DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES, CIVIC PASSIONS AND PERSONAL BELIEFS HEDED 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.

(b) THE PEOPLE OF COLORADO MUST TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE CHANGING TIMES IN WHICH WE LIVE AND UPDATE THE AGE QUALIFICATION OF ELECTORS TO REFLECT THE EVOLUTION OF OUR SOCIETY, A SOCIETY THAT IN 1920 ENACTED THE 19-AMENDMENT THAT ALLOWED WOMEN TO VOTE, A SOCIETY ROCKED SO FERVENTLY BY VIETNAM WAR PROTESTS THAT THE 26-AMENDMENT WAS ENACTED TO LOWER THE VOTING AGE REQUIREMENT FROM TWENTY-ONE-YEARS-OLD TO EIGHTEEN-YEARS-OLD, A SOCIETY THAT IN 2018 IS SO EMBROILED WITHIN OUR OWN 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.

(c) INCIDENTALLY, AS NOTED IN ITEM (b), 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.

(d) ALTHOUGH THE 26. AMENDMENT EMPOWERS CONGRESS TO UPHOLD EIGHTEEN-YEARS-OLD AS THE MINIMUM VOTING AGE FOR FEDERAL ELECTIONS, THE SUPREME COURT'S

DECISION IN 1970, *OREGON v. MITCHELL*, 400 U.S. 112, HELD THAT 'LOWERING THE VOTING AGE FOR STATE AND LOCAL ELECTION WAS BEYOND CONGRESSIONAL PURVIEW,' THUS ALLOWING STATES TO SET THEIR OWN QUALIFICATIONS OF ELECTOR IN LOCAL AND STATE ELECTIONS.

(e) THE SENATE REPORT THAT ACCOMPANIED THE TWENTY-SIXTH AMENDMENT EXPLAINED THAT IT WAS PROPOSED FOR THREE REASONS:

- 1) "YOUNGER CITIZENS ARE FULLY MATURE ENOUGH TO VOTE."
- 2) "BEAR ALL OR MOST OF AN ADULT'S RESPONSIBILITIES."
- 3) "TO INFLUENCE OUR SOCIETY IN A PEACEFUL AND CONSTRUCTIVE MANNER."

(f) IN COLORADO IT IS LEGAL FOR SIXTEEN-YEAR-OLDS TO:

- 1) DRIVE A MOTOR VEHICLE.
- 2) HAVE AN OCCUPATION WHICH INVOLVES THE USE OF A MOTOR VEHICLE IF THE MINOR IS LICENSED TO OPERATE THE MOTOR VEHICLE.
- 3) WORK IN ANY NON-HAZARDOUS OCCUPATION.
- 4) WORK FOR ANY NUMBER OF HOURS AT ANY TIME OF THE DAY.
- 5) GET MARRIED WITH THE CONSENT OF BOTH PARENTS OR GUARDIANS OR COURT APPROVAL.

(e) IN THE U.S. MILITARY SYSTEM, SEVENTEEN-YEAR-OLDS MAY ENLIST INTO ANY BRANCH WITH PARENTAL CONSENT.

(2) **EFFECTIVE DATE.** THIS INITIATIVE SHALL BE EFFECTIVE ON THE DAY THE RESULTS OF THE 2018 GENERAL ELECTION ARE CERTIFIED BY THE GOVERNOR.

**Proponents for initiative 2017-2018 #168:**

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