

*Testimony Presented
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*Re: HJ 21, Resolution Proposing an Amendment to the State Constitution to Allow
Seventeen-Year-Old Persons Who Will be Eighteen Years of Age at the Next Regular
Election to Vote in Primaries Related to Such Elections*

Good morning/afternoon, Mr. Chairman. My name is Lucian Charles Gagliola. I am an eighteen-year-old senior from Notre Dame High School. I am Treasurer of the Millard Fillmore Political Action Club. I am here today to advocate HJ 21, which if enacted would allow certain seventeen-year-olds to vote in primary elections if they will be eighteen at the time of the general election.

I feel that younger people add a positive affect and a level of balance to primary elections. Many of my friends on both sides were willing to vote for candidates they agreed with on the issues, felt were the most qualified, or they trusted to stick to their convictions, rather than candidates who were popular. These candidates included Republicans Congressmen Duncan Hunter and Ron Paul as well as Democratic Senator Joe Biden and Governor Bill Richardson, qualified candidates that older voters were too jaded to support. Younger voters bring balance in elections

Why were young people willing to vote for less popular candidates? Why were young people so willing to support these candidates, while older party members were not? Well I remember when the buzz about 2008 began early last year. Immediately I became extremely enthusiastic, this would be my first vote and I wanted to do the right thing. I researched every candidate Democrat and Republican and picked one of the real

underdogs; I sent money and canvassed my neighborhood that August. By the time of the primary my man had dropped out, but if he was still in, despite his permanent status as an underdog, I would have voted for him without a second thought.

Young voters, unlike older ones, I think, bring this balance because they are optimistic and idealistic; they are not jaded from consistently voting for a losing candidate. They relish their first opportunity to vote and are more self-stylized in their voting than institutionalized by any political party.

This legislation has been enacted in eighteen states and has had a positive impact on the turnout of younger voters. It is my strong opinion that Connecticut should follow the paths of these other states and enact the same legislation.