Written Testimony in Support of Election Day Voter Registration

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My name is Alexander Furnas, I am a sophomore at Wesleyan University studying in the College of Social Studies. I am a student representative for Campus Progress, and run a chapter of CP at Wesleyan. I would like to enter into the record my support of EDR as an activist, a student, and a voter. We have seen in the last few election cycles the increasing prominence of the youth voting bloc, this is not a trend that is about to change. And as a member of that bloc, I would like to attest to the position of EDR as a vital issue to young people.

We must measure ourselves as a nation according not only to our goals and aspirations, but according to the empirical practice of our democracy. We, as Americans, often do not live up to our aspirations when it comes to electoral participation. This is a shameful trend, and yet there is hope. Minnesota has had EDR for over 30 years and it has been a tremendous success. In fact, the four states with the highest turnouts in 2004 were those with EDR, and those states with EDR saw a roughly turnout that was 14 percentage points higher than non-EDR states in the same year. This is what democracy should look like.

Moreover, EDR increases voter participation among traditionally marginalized groups. By enacting EDR legislation, we can substantively change our democracy and nation for the better at little or no cost.

But, these are facts that you have no doubt heard from numerous experts more qualified than myself. What I can, and do, attest to that is within bailiwick is how students and young people feel about this. We care about our democracy and we care about EDR, and I ask you to care too.