

ASSOCIATION OF HAWAIIAN CIVIC CLUBS

A RESOLUTION

No. 2019 -24

URGING THE STATE OF HAWAI'I TO EXTEND THE VOTING FRANCHISE TO ELIGIBLE RESIDENTS AGED SIXTEEN AND SEVENTEEN TO SUPPORT A CULTURE OF CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

WHEREAS, the Hawaiian Civic Club movement was founded in 1918 by Congressional Delegate Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalaniana'ole with the creation of the Hawaiian Civic Club; and

WHEREAS, the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs was formally organized in 1959 and has grown to a confederation of over 60 Hawaiian Civic Clubs located throughout the State of Hawai'i and the United States; and

WHEREAS, Prince Kūhiō, as the embodiment of the values of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, began his civic life at a young age, and at seventeen he represented the Kingdom of Hawai'i as a diplomat to Japan, and he continued to serve with honor and distinction throughout his life; and

WHEREAS, only 52.7 percent of registered voters cast ballots during Hawai'i's 2018 general election; and

WHEREAS, according to the United States Elections Project, since 1986, young voters aged 18 to 29 have had the lowest tendency to vote of any age demographic, and in 2018, just 32.6 percent of young voters cast ballots, compared to 45.8 percent for voters aged 30 to 44, 56.2 percent for voters aged 45 to 59, and 65.5 percent for voters age 60 and older; and

WHEREAS, according to *Lowering the Voting Age for Local Elections in 2017 and Beyond, Generation Citizen, Ver. 2.0 – Jan. 2017*, voting is a habit and a person's first election is critical to establishing that habit, and evidence from cities, counties, and countries that have lowered the voting age supports the argument that the age of 16 is a better time to start the habit of voting than 18; and

WHEREAS, the same article indicates voting in one election can increase the probability that a person will vote in the next election by over fifty percent and that shows that early voting experiences are an important determinant of future voting behavior; and

WHEREAS, 16- and 17-year-olds work and pay taxes on their income, can drive, and in some cases, are tried in adult courts; and

WHEREAS, seventeen nations have implemented policies of sixteen and seventeen-year-olds voting in some or all elections, including Argentina, Austria, Brazil, Cuba, Ecuador, Germany, Indonesia, Malta, Nicaragua, Norway, Scotland, and Sudan; and

WHEREAS, Takoma Park, Hyattsville, and Greenbelt in Maryland have lowered the voting age to 16 for local elections, and Berkeley, California, has lowered the voting age to 16 for school board elections; and

WHEREAS, extending the voting franchise to Hawai'i residents aged sixteen and seventeen in local elections statewide coupled with programs like robust civic education at the high school levels will likely increase the civic engagement of young people and help to instill a culture of voting, eventually leading to higher turnout among all demographics.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs at its 60th Annual Convention in Lahaina, Maui, in the malama of Welehu and the rising of Lā'au Pau, this 16th day of November 2019, urging the State of Hawai'i to extend the voting franchise to eligible residents aged sixteen and seventeen to support a culture of civic engagement; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a certified copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Governor of the State of Hawai'i, President of the State Senate, Speaker of the State House of Representatives, Chair of the State Senate subject matter committee on Hawaiian Affairs, Chair of the State House subject matter committee on Hawaiian Affairs, Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, and all County Mayors.



The undersigned hereby certifies that the foregoing Resolution was duly adopted in the malama of Welehu and the rising of Lā'au Pau on the 16th day of November 2019, at the 60th Annual Convention of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs in Lahaina, Maui.



Hailama V. K. K. Farden, President