

# **Vote16SF: Expanding Voting Rights to 16 and 17 year-olds in San Francisco**

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**File No. 200477 [Charter Amendment - 16- and 17-Year-Olds Voting in Municipal Elections]**

**San Francisco Youth Commission Presenters: Ariana Arana, D9 Youth Commissioner; Sarah Ginsburg, Mayoral Youth Commissioner; Sarah Cheung, D1 Youth Commissioner**

**June 15, 2020  
Rules Committee**

# History of Vote16 Movement in San Francisco

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- **2016 Vote16SF Effort**
  - Ballot measure only lost by 2.8%
- **2020 Vote16 Support**
  - Community stakeholders: **Coleman Advocates, SF Rising, Community Youth Center, Generation Citizen, Power CA**, Chinese Progressive Association, Young Women's Freedom Center, LYRIC, Chinese for Affirmative Action, B Magic, Mo Magic, Peer Resources...
  - **30** community organizations support thus far

# Why This Matters Now?

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- Young people mobilizing right now for Black Lives Matter (ex. Mission High youth led protest, Golden Gate Bridge youth led march)
- Young people creating a movement, not a moment
- Young people are actively calling for defunding of police and accountable policy action. 16 & 17 year olds need a democratic way to participate - voting is one solution
- Young people will be most impacted by the current COVID-19 global pandemic: impacts on school, employment, finances, housing, health, etc.

# Why expand the voting age?

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# 16 and 17 year olds deserve to vote locally

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- Many civic responsibilities accrue at age 16. Work without limitations on hours, pay taxes, drive cars, and play key roles in their communities.
- As people who use public services and are affected by policy decisions, 16-17 year olds are ready to have a say in government decisions.
- Young people are uniquely impacted by the fallout of COVID-19. Setbacks in education will widen the achievement gap, and they have the longest to live with the impacts of a recession. 16- and 17-year-olds deserve a voice on the decisions that will shape the recovery.
- Nationally, 13% of grocery workers (essential during COVID-19) are 16-19.

# An issue of equity

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- 16- and 17-year-olds in SF are predominantly people of color, and are less likely to establish voting habits.
- 1 out of 3 SFUSD students has an immigrant parent.

<b>16- and 17-year-olds vs overall population in SF, by race</b>		
	<b>16 and 17</b>	<b>Overall</b>
<b>Asian American</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>34%</b>
<b>Black or African American</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Hispanic or Latinx</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>White (European descent)</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>40%</b>
<b>Two or more races</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>5%</b>

# 16 is a better age to begin voting than 18

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- Voting is a **habit**. 16 is a better time than 18 to establish that habit.
- Age 18 is a year of big transitions for most young people, making it a challenging time to establish new voting habits.
- Those who vote in one election are 25% more likely to vote in the next one. Voting at 16 would make lifelong voters.
- At age 16, young people are embedded in their communities where they know and care about local issues.
- 16 and 17 year olds have the opportunity to have classroom, peer, and family conversations that support informed voting choices.

**Questions?**