

ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 7-042

**A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF WHOLLY
REPRESENTATIVE PRIMARIES**

- WHEREAS,** Central Student Government (CSG), College Republicans, and College Democrats, as well as members of the Roosevelt Institute, have recognized the importance of increasing civic engagement by the student body due to low campus participation across the nation¹; **AND**
- WHEREAS,** according to the US Census Bureau, only 45% of eligible voters between 18-29 years of age voted in the 2012 U.S. elections²; **AND**
- WHEREAS,** in 2012 and 2014, 64.2% and 59.6% of U-M students, respectively, were registered to vote, with respective student voter turnout rates of 44% and 14.3%³; **AND**
- WHEREAS,** in 2016, 68.2% of students were registered to vote, with a student voter turnout rate of 44.7%⁴; **AND**
- WHEREAS,** midterm elections have had historically low turnouts, as only 21 percent of those under 30 turned out to vote in 2014, compared with 36 percent overall⁵; **AND**
- WHEREAS,** voter turnout on university campuses across the country was at 19% percent in 2014^{6,7}; **AND**
- WHEREAS,** voter turnout at the University of Michigan in 2014 was even lower than the national university average, at 14%⁸; **AND**
- WHEREAS,** the University of Michigan has begun taking active measures to institutionally address low voter turnout and civic participation of students by creating and launching the Big Ten Voting Challenge⁹; **AND**

¹ <http://college.usatoday.com/2015/09/25/why-college-students-arent-voting/>

² <https://www.census.gov/prod/2014pubs/p20-573.pdf>

³ http://obp.umich.edu/wp-content/uploads/pubdata/surveys/NSLVE_UMAA_2014.pdf

⁴ http://obp.umich.edu/wp-content/uploads/pubdata/surveys/NSLVE_UMAA_2012_2016.pdf

⁵ <http://now.tufts.edu/articles/going-after-youth-vote>

⁶ <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/12/opinion/the-worst-voter-turnout-in-72-years.html>

⁷ <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/2014-midterm-election-turnout-lowest-in-70-years>

⁸ <https://record.umich.edu/articles/big-ten-challenge-aims-boost-student-voter-turnout>

⁹ <https://record.umich.edu/articles/big-ten-challenge-aims-boost-student-voter-turnout>

WHEREAS, Central Student Government recognizes the importance of voter participation and is currently a sponsor of the Big Ten Voting Challenge; **AND**

WHEREAS, there is ample research to support the idea that more than just programming is needed to increase voter turnout, as voter laws inhibit many students from actively exercising their right to vote^{10,11}; **AND**

WHEREAS, current Michigan Election Law disenfranchises many student voters at the University of Michigan and throughout the state; **AND**

WHEREAS, one such law that disenfranchises students is the inability 17-year-olds who will be 18 by the time of the general to participate in the primary process; **AND**

WHEREAS, current primaries are not wholly representative of the general electorate; **AND**

WHEREAS, voters are 25% more likely to vote in a subsequent election if they vote in the primary and many 17 year olds who do not vote in the primaries end up not voting in the general election¹²; **AND**

WHEREAS, 22 states have already recognized this right to vote for 17 year olds who will be 18 at the time of the general election¹³; **AND**

WHEREAS, in one such state, Illinois, after these voting rights were extended, 17-year-old voters turned out at a higher rate than those aged 20-40¹⁴; **AND**

WHEREAS, as noted by the University of Michigan Office of the President, “The right to vote is one of our most powerful freedoms, and participation in elections is essential for a democratic society. Voting in elections gives you a voice in the decisions that affect local, state, and national issues;”¹⁵

¹⁰ https://ssir.org/articles/entry/increasing_voter_turnout_what_if_anything_can_be_done

¹¹ <https://thinkprogress.org/5-ways-to-fix-americas-dismal-voter-turnout-problem-6342bc2d1190/>

¹² <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2016/11/7/13347080/voting-age-election-16>.

¹³ http://www.fairvote.org/primary_voting_at_age_17#state_by_state_map_presidential_primaries.

¹⁴ <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/politics/chi-17-year-olds-voted-at-higher-rate-than-parents-in-primary-election-20140507-story.html>.

¹⁵ <https://president.umich.edu/news-communications/letters-to-the-community/welcome-to-the-big-ten-voting-challenge/>

WHEREAS, laws impeding said right to vote should be reformed in support of more equitable enfranchisement; **THEREFORE IT BE**

RESOLVED, that the CSG officially supports the establishment of wholly representative primaries through reforming election law to allow 17 year olds eligible to vote in a general election to also vote in the respective primaries; **AND BE IT FINALLY**

RESOLVED, this resolution of support will accompany students from the University of Michigan’s Roosevelt Institute, and other relevant student advocates, on their trip to Lansing to meet with representatives to advocate for this reform.

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SPONSORS

Central Student Government
Executive Committee

College Republicans
at the University of Michigan

College Democrats
at the University of Michigan

The Roosevelt Institute
Chapter of the University of Michigan

Attest

Alex Contis, LS&A
Speaker of the Assembly

Isabel Baer, LS&A
Vice Speaker of the Assembly

President's Approval

Anushka Sarkar

Presented to the Assembly for *First Reads* on _____

Presented to the Assembly for *Second Reads* on _____

Yes: _____ No: _____ Abs: _____ Date: _____

Signature Necessary: _____ Signature Received By _____: _____

