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## A BILL FOR AN ACT

PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE STATE OF  
HAWAII TO AMEND THE QUALIFYING AGE OF VOTERS FOR ANY STATE  
OR LOCAL ELECTION.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that just over one-half  
2 of registered voters, and slightly less than one-third of voters  
3 aged eighteen to twenty-nine, cast ballots in Hawaii during the  
4 2018 general election. Studies show that voting is a habit that  
5 may be acquired during a voter's first election. Developing a  
6 regular routine of voting activism at an early age tends to  
7 significantly increase the probability that the person will  
8 continue to vote future elections. This makes early voting  
9 experiences an important determinant of future voting behavior.

10           Evidence from jurisdictions that lowered the voting age to  
11 sixteen demonstrates that sixteen, rather than eighteen, is a  
12 better time to start the habit of voting. Sixteen and  
13 seventeen-year-olds work and pay taxes; drive; and in some  
14 cases, may be married, have children, or even be tried in adult  
15 courts. These individuals should be able to vote in matters  
16 that directly impact them. The legislature further finds that



1 extending voting rights to Hawaii residents aged sixteen and  
2 seventeen, coupled with robust civic education at the high  
3 school level, will likely increase the civic engagement of young  
4 people and help instill a culture of voting that will lead to  
5 higher voter turnout among all demographics in the State.

6 The purpose of this Act is to propose an amendment to  
7 article II, section 1, of the Constitution of the State of  
8 Hawaii to lower the voting age for state and local elections  
9 from eighteen to sixteen years of age.

10 SECTION 2. Article II, section 1, of the Constitution of  
11 the State of Hawaii is amended to read as follows:

12 "QUALIFICATIONS

13 Section 1. Every citizen of the United States who [~~shall~~  
14 ~~have~~] has attained the age of [~~eighteen~~] sixteen years, [~~have~~]  
15 has been a resident of this State not less than one year next  
16 preceding the election and [~~be~~] is a voter registered as  
17 provided by law, shall be qualified to vote in any state or  
18 local election."

19 SECTION 3. The question to be printed on the ballot shall  
20 be as follows:



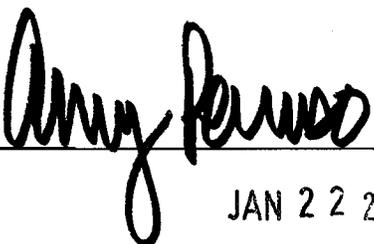
1 "Shall the Constitution of the State of Hawaii be amended  
 2 to lower the qualifying age of voters for any state or local  
 3 election from eighteen years of age to sixteen years of age?"

4 SECTION 4. Constitutional material to be repealed is  
 5 bracketed and stricken. New constitutional material is  
 6 underscored.

7 SECTION 5. This amendment shall take effect upon  
 8 compliance with article XVII, section 3, of the Constitution of  
 9 the State of Hawaii.

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INTRODUCED BY:

  
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 JAN 22 2021



# H.B. NO. 449

**Report Title:**

Constitutional Amendment; Voting Age; State and Local Elections

**Description:**

Proposes a constitutional amendment to lower the qualifying age of voters for any state or local election to sixteen years of age.

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