



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1054

JAY D. LIVINGSTONE
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
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Committees:
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Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure
Municipalities and Regional Government
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July 14, 2021

The Honorable Daniel Ryan
The Joint Committee on Election Laws,
House Chair
24 Beacon St., Room 443
Boston, MA 02133

The Honorable Barry Finegold
The Joint Committee on Election Laws, Senate Chair
24 Beacon St., Room 511-A
Boston, MA 02133

Re: H815 An Act relative to youth voter engagement

Dear Chairman Ryan and Chairman Finegold,

I write today expressing my support for a piece of legislation that I have cosponsored to support youth voting: H815, *An Act relative to youth voter engagement*. This piece of legislation would allow 17-year-olds who are eligible to vote in a general election to vote in the primaries for it.

This bill would allow these young voters to have a voice on who is on the ballot that they will be voting with. This bill has bipartisan support and twenty-seven other states have already adopted this practice. It is important to allow these voters to vote in the primaries because Chicago's 2020 primaries showed that registered seventeen-year-old voters cast ballots at rates consistent with or higher than other age groups.

H815 would allow this specific group of voters to be fully engaged in their first election cycle and make them more likely to vote in future primaries because voting is habitual. I believe that this is an important step that we need to take in order to encourage higher voter engagement. I hope that the committee will report the bill out favorably.

Sincerely,

Jay Livingstone
State Representative
8th Suffolk District