

1 [Motion to Issue a Letter supporting Assembly Constitutional Amendment 8, Allowing 17 year Olds to
2 Vote in State Elections]

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4 **Supplemental Information:**

5 Please see the attached letter.

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Youth Commission
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May 6, 2019

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Room 4126
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Dear Assemblymember Low:

We are the San Francisco Youth Commission, a chartered commission established by San Francisco voters in 1995, comprised of young San Franciscans ages 12-23 appointed by San Francisco's Mayor and Board of Supervisors to advise them on youth-related issues. We are again writing to extend our support for lowering the voting age from 18 years-old to 17 years-old at the state level, and are pleased to support Assembly Constitutional Amendment 8.

We know that this is the second time this amendment is being brought forward, and when it was introduced as ACA 10 in 2017, we also supported it back then. The San Francisco Youth Commission passed [resolution 1617-AL-05](#) [Resolution Urging the Board of Supervisors to Support Assembly Constitutional Amendment 10, Allowing 17 year Olds to Vote in State Elections] on Monday, April 17, 2017, and are proud to have supported this important effort.

Research has shown that the earlier in life one votes, the more likely they are to form a lifelong habit of voting. As a result, there has been a nationwide movement to engage youth in the electoral process earlier in their lives. California has already taken some important steps to promote youth engagement, and is one of twenty states that allow 16-year-olds to preregister to vote. However, there is more that the state can do to promote young voter participation. Twenty-two states and the District of Columbia permit 17-year olds to vote in the primary elections or caucuses if the voter will turn 18 before the general election. Three localities—Takoma Park, Greenbelt, and Hyattsville, Maryland—have gone even further to allow 16-year-olds to vote in their municipal elections. Here in California, voters in the City of Berkeley approved a charter amendment last November that will allow the City Council to lower the voting age to 16-years old for school board elections.

For most young adults, their first contact with the political process is in their high school government class, or through volunteering on campaigns for community service credit. Many 18-year olds are in a time of transition—graduating from high school, going to college, or getting a job. Lowering the voting age to 17-years old will involve young people at a time when they are still connected to their school, their home, and their community, and allow them to establish long term voting habits.

By lowering the voting age from 18- to 17-years old, ACA 8 will give youth a voice in the democratic process, thus instilling a lifelong habit of voting all Americans deserve. For all those reasons, the San Francisco Youth Commission has urged the San Francisco Board of Supervisors to support ACA 8.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Arianna Nassiri in black ink.

Arianna Nassiri, Chair,
2018-19 Youth Commission Civic Engagement Committee

Handwritten signature of Bahlam Vigil in black ink.

Bahlam Vigil, Chair,
2018-19 Youth Commission
Adopted on May 6, 2019