

Chair Keenan, Chair Ryan, and members of the Joint Committee on Election Laws, I'm Marilyn Formal, and I'm pleased to offer testimony **in support of S.412 / H.670 An Act enabling children's right to vote**. I'm the mother of the author of these bills.

What makes America the land of opportunity? What makes MA one of the top states? Think about the history of our national and state governments. The courts and policy makers finally listened to women. Let's face it - women became eligible to vote, primarily because of their economic contribution to the GDP and state revenues. Society finally recognized women in the workforce and as essential family earners for fighting inflation and improving quality of life. Women's right to vote certainly changed the trajectory of my life and the lives of my peers. How long will it take society to recognize the constitutional rights of children? Many under-18's work outside the home to supplement the family income and/or save for their future. Unfortunately, current labor laws limit under-14's earning potential. In this fast-paced world, why don't children have a voice? After all, they are the ones who will inherit the deficit that currently is now more than \$32 trillion ([The National Debt Is Now More than \\$32 Trillion. What Does That Mean?](#)). The generations ahead are the ones who will experience climate change the most intensely. It's time to be forward thinking and give children the most basic right of citizenship, the right to vote.

We need input from all constituents to assess programs funded by national and state governments. As a clinical research coordinator, I learned that children were subjects in research studies funded by the NIH (<https://grants.nih.gov/policy/inclusion/lifespan.htm>). Their participation has funded new medications and treatments for unmet medical needs that affect the well-being not only of the MA community but also the health of the nation. As major champions of the STEM curriculum, MA representatives must focus their energies on acknowledging children who are learning these skills for next generation breakthroughs. Civic engagement will teach, encourage and empower children to make decisions that will give them the opportunity for a better life and more prosperous government.

I urge the Joint Committee on Election Laws to report **S.412 / H.670 An Act enabling children's right to vote** favorably and in a timely manner. Thank you for your consideration.

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