

Paul L Evans
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
DISTRICT 20



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

April 10, 2019

Committee on Rules
Oregon House of Representatives
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Ref: House Bill 2824 (HB 2824)

Chairman Holvey, Vice-Chairs, and Committee Members:

Thank you for your consideration of HB 2824. This measure provides us with a unique opportunity to demonstrate to the next generation our trust in them. HB 2824 would establish an Oregon Youth Council to advise the Governor on all matters of concern to the next generation of Oregonians. At this moment in history, I frankly cannot think of a more important signal – or symbol.

According to recent research only four (4) of every ten (10) Americans can pass the US Citizenship test: the very same examination we require of all who seek to become a citizen of the United States of America. Think about that for a moment: 40% of adults know enough, remember enough, or perhaps care enough to know, how our government functions.

Closer to home, it is a not-so-secret disgrace that Oregon schools regularly rank near the bottom of the list in terms of civics proficiency for high school graduates. Even though we have sound curriculum, most of our K-12 schools prioritize the standardized tests over the non-standardized test materials; that structural problem is not solved by this measure – but it may be improved.

Imagine a situation where students across the State of Oregon see – with their own eyes – ideas and issues raised within the public square about the things they care most about – and done so through an advisory board of their peers. Imagine the power of giving voice to those who believe they have none, even though they will be straddled with the impacts of the decisions we, here – in this body – make.

I believe that we have the most complex form of government in human history: with our multiple layers of governance including cities, counties, and special districts – we need a citizenry empowered, prepared, and invested in self-governance. HB 2824 will move us forward. It reflects our values, our virtues, and ultimately, it can provide the next generation with a new tool to help shape their future.

In conclusion, I want to thank you for your efforts as well as your attention to this measure. If you have questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Paul L. Evans". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.