

# VOTER PRE-REGISTRATION:

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## WHAT IS VOTER PRE-REGISTRATION?

- Voter pre-registration will allow young Minnesotans to pre-register to vote when they turn 17. They will still not cast a ballot until 18.
- **22 states currently have some form of voter pre-registration.** States including Florida, Louisiana, Maryland, Rhode Island and West Virginia have established a bright line that allows 17-year-olds (and in some cases 16-year-olds) to pre-register.

## WHY EXPAND VOTER REGISTRATION TO YOUNGER MINNESOTANS?

- **Research shows that when youth are civically engaged, they are more successful in school and more likely to participate in their communities later in life.** Engaged youth are also less likely to participate in risky behaviors, including truancy, substance abuse, and dropping out of school (*Center for the Study of Social Policy 2011*)
- Pre-registering creates a real-world application for classroom content, making students more invested in their classes and more likely to succeed in school (Kahne and Sporte 2008)
- At 17, young people are thinking about who they want to be as adults. Pre-registering youth to vote at 17 makes civic engagement a part of their plan for their adult lives (*Kahne and Sporte 2008*)
- Our current voter registration laws are confusing. Allowing pre-registration at 17 will establish a bright line and keep young people from registering improperly.

## WHAT ARE THE COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH PRE-REGISTRATION?

- Minnesota's voter registration system is already capable of handling pre-registration by labeling them as 'pending' registrations that will automatically become 'active' when the registrant turns 18. Small costs such as updating registration materials are already a part of the Secretary of State's budget. **There will be no fiscal note for this legislation, and no additional cost to Minnesotans.**
- Pre-registration poses absolutely no threat to the data privacy of minors. While voter registration information is part of the public record, pre-registered voters' information, including address and phone number would remain private until their registrations became 'active' on their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.