

Chair Garlick, Chair Lewis, and Honorable Members of the Committee:

My name is Yiannis Asikis, I'm Zeke Kramer and we're high school juniors at Boston University Academy. We're here today to represent the collective voice of Massachusetts students, advocating for a fundamental change that we believe is pivotal for our educational system. I'm here today on my own behalf, as a member of the Massachusetts Association of Student Representatives to testify in support of H.474/S.287: An Act relative to student representative voting rights. As highschool students, we are deeply committed to empowering civic engagement in education, and we believe that every student deserves the right to actively participate in shaping their own educational experience.

By granting student representatives the power to vote on school committees, we are not merely supporting token representation; we are recognizing our right to influence the decisions that impact our academic journey. Education is a two-way street, and we, the students, are not passive recipients but active contributors. Our insights, experiences, and aspirations are invaluable assets that can significantly enrich the educational policies and initiatives of our institutions.

Honorable Committee Members,

Allow me to emphasize the profound impact this bill can have on the very fabric of our educational community. Beyond the classroom walls, this initiative symbolizes a commitment to nurturing responsible citizenship and educational engagement throughout the Commonwealth.

When students are granted the opportunity to participate actively in decision-making processes, it fosters a sense of ownership, accountability, and pride in our educational institutions.

Moreover, empowering students with voting rights fosters a culture of mutual respect and understanding between the student body and the academic administration. It bridges the gap between generations, promoting a spirit of collaboration and shared responsibility. By involving us in these crucial decisions, we are preparing ourselves for a future where civic engagement and informed decision-making are the cornerstones of a thriving society.

In conclusion, I urge this committee to recognize the transformative potential of granting student representative voting rights. Together, let us pave the way for a future where every student's voice is not just acknowledged but celebrated; where the youth today become the responsible leaders of tomorrow. Thank you for your time and consideration.