

Dear _____

I write to urge you to cosponsor H.B. 2056, proposed by Texas State Representative Garnet Coleman. H.B. 2056 is a bill to increase voter registration among high school and college students in order to establish 100% voter registration statewide. The legislation would require that, at least twice a year, every eligible high school and first year college student must receive a voter registration form in order to register to vote. This bill also mandates that all first year college students receive a voter registration form during orientation.

Despite the large amount of money and time spent by political campaigns and nonpartisan voter registration organizations, nearly 20% of all Texas residents are not registered to vote. The percentage of unregistered residents is even higher for youth. Since Texas requires residents to be registered to vote, in effect, those who are not registered are shut out of the political process.

First and foremost, this policy will empower youth to recognize that they do play an active role in their community and that they are an important part of the democratic process. For example, in states that have election-day voter registration, youth turnout is typically about 14% more than states that do not have same day voter registration. Teaching youth early the importance of voting will better ensure that they remain voters for the rest of their lives.

Moreover, this requirement provides a great benefit with little administrative burden. In fact, mass registrations in the spring and early fall will cut down on the overwhelming number of voter registration requests election officials receive in the few weeks prior to election day. It will also lead to cleaner and more complete voter rolls. Over time this type of active government involvement will create near 100% voter registration. There will not be a question as to who is registered or not, because most everyone will be registered. As we all know, clean and complete voter rolls are necessary to prevent voter fraud but also ensure all eligible voters can vote.

Again, I strongly urge you to support H.B. 2056. I look forward to hearing your response to my request.

Sincerely
