Proposition 18 Ballot Argument - In Favor:

Proposition 18 will allow those who will be 18 years of age by the time of the general election to participate in the primary election of that year if they are 17 at the time of the primary. This important election reform will not only allow first-time voters to participate in the full election cycle, but also has the potential to boost youth participation in our elections.

We need youth voices to be represented at the ballot box. Allowing some 17-year-olds to vote in primary elections if, and only if, they will be 18 by the time of the general election is a simple way to amplify the voices of young voters throughout California and will lead to a more inclusive election process for our state overall.

California is behind the curve when it comes to this issue. Nearly half of states in the U.S. already allow 17-year-olds to participate in primaries and caucuses. If an individual plans to participate in the general election as a first-time voter, it is only reasonable that they be afforded the opportunity to shape the choices that appear on the general election ballot by participating in the primary. Proposition
18 links this 17-year-old participation to the age of majority by requiring that the individual be 18 by the time of the general election.

According to research conducted by the California Civic Engagement Project, in the 2020 primary election in California, youth voters (those aged between 18 and 24) made up 14.5% of the population eligible to vote, however only about 6% of those who actually voted in the election. Youth are extremely underrepresented in our electoral process despite the fact that they are heavily impacted by the policies created by those elected.

Not only does research indicate that the youth population has the lowest turnout levels out of any age demographic, but studies also show that voting is habit-forming - once an individual votes in an election, they are more likely to do so again. Early involvement in the electoral process for first-time voters should be a high priority for this reason.
Proposition 18 is an opportunity to empower California’s youngest voters and encourage them to become life-long participants in the most fundamental act of democracy. Please support Proposition 18.

Kevin Mullin  
Assemblymember – CA Assembly District 22

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