Resolution regarding the Vote16DC Campaign

Whereas, 16- and 17-year-olds are affected by the policy decisions of elected officials in areas including education, employment, housing, public safety, police conduct, transportation, health care, the environment and more;

Whereas elected officials are not directly accountable to the 16-and17-year-olds over whose lives they hold such power;

Whereas, many 16-and-17-year-olds work and pay taxes without input into budget decisions;

Whereas, the current low rate of participation in local elections is an obstacle to democratic governance, and lowering the voting age to 16 promotes lifelong voting habits and also increases voting among the families of young voters;

Whereas, research shows that 16-and-17-year-olds as a group are as informed and engaged in political issues as older voters as a group;

Whereas many 16-year-olds already bear enormous responsibility, including caring for family members, driving, mentoring other youth, working and paying taxes, preparing for college and careers, and making important health care decisions;

Whereas, lowering the voting age to 16 encourages improved civics education in schools and the community.

Whereas, voting is a behavior that relies on a thought process that is sometimes called “cold cognition,” a slow and deliberate process that is as developed by age 16 as it is in adults. “Hot cognition,” on the other hand, involves impulsive control, which is not as developed in 16-and-17-year-olds, but is no more of a factor in voting decisions for youth than it is for adults.

Therefore, DC for Democracy supports lowering the voting age to 16 and joins the Vote16DC campaign.

[Passed by acclamation June 21, 2018]