

My Voice in America's Democracy

As we know the Constitution established the United States as a democratic republic. The people govern themselves as American citizens vote for officials that make decisions for our country. The legal age to vote in America is 18, and I feel like this greatly diminished my voice in America's democracy.

My voice in America's democracy is limited at the age of 13; in fact, it is greatly limited for the next 4.5 years until I am 18 and old enough to vote. In my opinion, the age of 16 is when the right to vote should be earned. American citizens that are 16 are currently able to drive and pay taxes but for some reason they aren't allowed to vote. It is unreal that a 16 year old can legally drive a car and manage money by paying taxes but they aren't allowed to vote for leadership in our country.

In our country, many times 16 year olds know as much or more about politics as older voters, and let's be honest about voting - do most adults research candidates and issues before voting? 16 year olds could have a say in leadership in our country by voting for federal, state, and local candidates and contribute to the majority of citizens who vote officials into office.

The argument could be made that 16 year olds are immature and they don't pay attention to their country, but this is a flawed argument. At 16 they have the advantage of still being in high school and trained to do research and understand topics - something I feel many adults lose sight of as they get older. Many 16 year olds pay attention and they are very smart, and if they aren't mature enough they shouldn't be allowed to drive in the first place.

People today might agree that 16 year olds are old enough to vote because of their maturity. However, it is important to note that when our country makes decisions it is only fair to 78% of our country.

This leaves 22% of our nation who are younger than 18. Because of this, and because 16 year olds are often tax payers and given great the responsibility of driving, I believe that the legal voting age in America should be lowered to 16 to help improve my voice, and the voices of so many others, in America's Democracy.