

My name is Shae Horning and I am a sophomore at the University of Minnesota. I am the State Government Affairs Coordinator for the Undergraduate Student Government and am writing to express strong support for the amendment to Senate File 3616, which would allow student governments at postsecondary institutions to request an additional polling place for at least one day on the institution's campus. I would like to thank Senator Mitchell for carrying Senate File 3616 and choosing to support and uplift student voices.

I would like to begin by emphasizing the immense amount of dedication that each member of our student government has for the well-being of the entire student body. Our president, vice president, and representatives are elected every spring by a popular vote, a process that is currently ramping up. An important aspect of these all-campus elections is that any student group can add a referendum to be voted on, so long as they surpass a threshold of signatures. The inclusion of these referendums in our campus elections is just one way that the Undergraduate Student Government works to ensure that all student voices are heard. In my time working in student government, I have been continuously impressed by the vast network of connections that USG has created. We have close ties to faculty, administrators, and students of all backgrounds. I have learned that when students speak up, the university listens.

The Undergraduate Student Government's Row the Vote effort in the 2022 election cycle was the most successful voter registration and mobilization effort in university history. USG registered thousands of students to vote and shuttled similar numbers of students to polling locations both before and on election day. Row the Vote demonstrated that students across the University of Minnesota campus have a passion for voting so long as the resources are available to them. Allowing postsecondary institutions to request an additional, on-campus polling place would provide students with these resources.

Row the Vote brought many students to the polls, but students have made clear that we want the polls brought to us. Like many students, my schedule is booked solid almost every day. Often I'm double booked and am rushing to get from end of campus to the other. I, like many others, simply do not have the time to travel to one of the few polling locations near campus. In fact, a 2018 Tufts University survey found that this is one of the most common reasons youth voters do not turn out to the polls. University students specifically would benefit immensely from the ability of their institutions to request on-campus polling locations.

Minnesota has long been a trailblazer in youth voting. Why should this historic support end just because the current voting options have been deemed good enough? Minnesota's future generations should not have to settle for good enough.