

Ladies and Gentlemen, my name is Maitreya Reeder. I am a Junior at St. Anthony Village High School and heavily involved in advocacy and civic action, currently serving as the 45th Minnesota Youth Secretary of State and a 2025 National Youth Advocate. I would like to express my overwhelming support for this bill for a number of reasons.

I would like to state to all of you that some of the most capable people I have met in my entire life have been under the age of eighteen. I have seen nonprofits started by youth that have reached thousands of people, I have seen thousands of dollars raised towards international causes, and bills written from the ideas of high schoolers that will be introduced this legislative session with the hopes of being passed into law. Including this one. There is absolutely no doubt in my mind that there is an overwhelming surplus of qualified, willing students to fill these roles.

Our country is built on the idea that people affected by a ruling form of government should have representation within that government. Yet, our schools- the very institutions set to prepare us for a life of leadership and influence- are failing to provide us with that opportunity and representation. Students are the primary stakeholders in decisions made on school boards, and that is an unavoidable fact. But including student representation isn't just "fair"- it strengthens our democracy by ensuring that those affected by policies have a say in making them.

Thank you.