



**NEW MEXICO  
BUSINESS COALITION**

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**RE: Oppose HB 217 16- and 17-Years Olds as Qualified Electors**

Mr./Madame Chair and Committee Members:

The New Mexico Business Coalition (NMBC) represents hundreds of businesses and thousands of New Mexicans. Our focus is to make New Mexico a better place to live and work, where we have an abundance of good-paying jobs to provide for our families.

I strongly urge you to vote no on HB 217 which would allow 16 and 17-year-olds to vote.

Teenagers are going through tremendous life changes as they transition from childhood to adulthood. They simply are not at a maturity level to warrant making decisions that will significantly impact their lives as well as the lives of everyone else. The ages of 16 to 17 years of age are usually a time in life that brings great uncertainty and struggles as the person goes through this transition. Learning about who they are and what they believe, this is not a time to have a mid-teen make critical decisions regarding the future of our state and country.

This measure is unkind to our mid-teens. They are struggling with decisions for themselves and are not ready to make community-altering decisions. This type of pressure should not be allowed.

The U.S. and New Mexico Constitutions protect our youth by limiting the voting age to 18 years. We should respect that age limitation and leave it intact.

Thank you for your service to our state. I appreciate your consideration of my comments. and urge you to vote 'NO' on HB 217 16- and 17-Years Olds as Qualified Electors.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carla J. Sonntag".

Carla J. Sonntag  
President and CEO