

Opposition Testimony – HJR 1
Constitutional resolutions Committee Hearing
April 19, 2023, 9:00 AM
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Chairman Plummer, Vice Chairman Hillyer, Ranking Member Mohamed, my name is Karen Leith and I appreciate the opportunity to share my thoughts with the committee about my opposition to HJR 1, which I is an attack on direct democracy. This is an emotional issue for me. I am 74 years old having graduated with my BA in 1970, before the voting age was lowered to 18 (in 1971). My college years were clouded with the Vietnam war and a draft lottery that decided who went to such an unjust, unwinnable war – and all without any voice in the political process that made such decisions. Young adults had no other recourse than to take to the streets.

Having a real voice – one that allows actions that directly allow citizens to raise their voices, especially when politicians, elected officials, do not listen to the people – is a passion for me. The fact that I am so involved in testifying on bills and being part of organizations that help people raise their voices is a direct result of my experiences of the 1960s when 18-20 year-olds were dying in a war without their voice counting. I lost a number of friends to the Vietnam war. Every time I fight to have a voice or for someone else to have a voice, I remember all those who died without a voice simply because the elected politicians who had the power did not have to be accountable to them. **Direct democracy, petitions and ballot initiatives, are a check on the accountability of our elected politicians. It is about the majority, not a minority! Moving to 60% gives the minority the power. That is not democracy.**

This joint resolution is undemocratic, unpopular and totally unnecessary. Every citizen needs to have a voice in our government. Direct democracy is very important! Vote NO on this joint resolution.