

The original documents are located in Box D26, folder “NAACP Youth Conference 18 Year Old Vote, Washington, DC, April 22, 1969” of the Ford Congressional Papers: Press Secretary and Speech File at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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NOTES FOR

N.A.A.C.P. YOUTH CONFERENCE ON 18-YEAR-OLD VOTE

11:15¹² a.m. Tuesday, April 22, 1969

Senate Office Building Auditorium

1968 Republican Platform Statement on Vote for 18-year-olds

" OUR YOUTH TODAY ARE ENDOWED WITH GREATER KNOWLEDGE AND MATURITY THAN ANY SUCH GENERATION OF THE PAST. THEIR POLITICAL RESTLESSNESS REFLECTS THEIR URGENT HOPE TO ACHIEVE A MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMENSURATE WITH THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS AS RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE ABILITIES OF THESE YOUNGER CITIZENS, THEIR DESIRE TO PARTICIPATE, AND THEIR SERVICE IN THE NATION'S DEFENSE, WE BELIEVE THAT LOWER AGE GROUPS SHOULD BE ACCORDED THE RIGHT TO VOTE. WE BELIEVE THAT

2/ GOP PLATFORM ON LOWER VOTING AGE

STATES WHICH HAVE NOT YET ACTED SHOULD REEVALUATE
THEIR POSITIONS WITH RESPECT TO 18-YEAR-OLD VOTING
AND THAT EACH STATE SHOULD DECIDE THIS MATTER FOR
ITSELF. WE URGE THE STATES TO ACT NOW."

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Michigan Referendum Nov. 8, 1966 on Vote for 18-year-olds

Statewide, Michigam voters voted better than 3 to 2
against lowering the voting age to 18. The vote was
1,267,872 "no" to 703,076 "yes."

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In the Fifth Congressional District, voters rejected the
proposal by more than 2 to 1. The combined vote in
Kent and Ionia Counties was 71,170 "no" to 31,173 "yes."

1. HAVE LONG SUPPORTED GIVING THE VOTE TO 18*YEAR*OLDS.

2. SHOULDN'T REALLY TALK ABOUT "GIVING" THE VOTE TO 18-YEAR-OLDS BECAUSE THEY HAVE EARNED IT.

3. THEY HAVE EARNED IT BECAUSE THEY ARE...

...FAR MORE MATURE AT THAT AGE THAN AMERICANS OF EARLIER GENERATIONS

...HAVE SHOWN THEY CAN ACCEPT OBLIGATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITY.

2/ NOTES ON LOWER VOTING AGE

...ARE FIGHTING FOR THEIR COUNTRY OR EARNING A LIVING OR DEBATING THE GREAT ISSUES OF THE DAY IN COLLEGE.

...ARE IN MANY CASES BUYING A HOME, RAISING A FAMILY AND PAYING TAXES.

4. HAVING ACCEPTED THE OBLIGATIONS AND DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF CITIZENSHIP, 18*YEAR*OLDS SHOULD HAVE...ARE ENTITLED TO...THE BASIC RIGHTS OF CITIZENSHIP, THE RIGHT TO VOTE.

3/ NOTES...N.A.A.C.P. LOWER VOTING AGE

5. LET'S LOOK AT TODAY'S 18*YEAR*OLD: HE IS...
...BETTER EDUCATED THAN HIS PARENTS WERE AT THAT AGE
...FAR MORE IS EXPECTED OF HIM
...THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF TELEVISION, ~~HE~~ HE
SEE^S HISTORY HAPPENING AND THUS ~~IS~~ IS FAR MORE
KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT CURRENT EVENTS THAN ~~WAS~~ THE
18*YEAR*OLD OF PREVIOUS GENERATIONS.
HE ~~IS~~ IS KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT OUR POLITICAL PROCESSES
AND ~~IS~~ CAPABLE OF MAKING INTELLIGENT VOTING DECISIONS.

4/ N.A.A.C.P. NOTES ON LOWERING VOTING AGE

6. WHAT IT ALL ADDS UP TO IS THAT OUR 18-19-and-20
YEAR OLDS HAVE EARNED THE RIGHT TO BE HEARD THROUGH
THE BALLOT.

7. TODAY THE VAST MAJORITY OF ~~OUR~~ OUR YOUNG PEOPLE
SHOULD, BY RIGHT, BE ALLOWED TO SPEAK AT THE POLLS.
I, FOR ONE, BELIEVE THEY HAVE A CONTRIBUTION TO MAKE
TO THE REST OF THE NATION.

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NOTES

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, U.S.
OFFICE OF THE MINORITY LEADER
PUBLIC DOCUMENT
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WASH. D.C.

APR. 22, 1969

Gerald R. Ford
M.C.

TUESDAY
11:15 A.M.

N.A.A.C.P. YOUTH CONFERENCE

18 YR.-OLD VOTE

