

PRESS RELEASE:

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TEENS TO PROTEST FOR LOWER THE VOTE 2000 ON ELECTION DAY, DECLARE YOUTH RIGHTS SUPPORTERS

Washington, D.C.-October 8, 2000

Young people across the U.S. will turn their apathetic reputation inside out, as two of the largest youth rights organizations announce nationwide protests on Election Day, November 7, 2000.

Young people are making their voices heard loud and clear. They are tired of being treated like second-class citizens in America. They are tired of facing oppression at the hand adult American society. They are tired of unconstitutional age restrictions. They are tired of being stereotyped by the media as violent, lazy, stupid and apathetic. Above all else, young people want to be a partner in the political process. They want the right to vote, to have a voice in the American Democratic Process.

On Election Day, November 7th, when more than half of all adult voters will be "too busy" or "too tired" to vote, teens across America will boldly demand the most essential of democratic rights. Alex Koroknay-Palicz, President of the National Youth Rights Association, believes these protests will "voice the concerns of the voiceless": millions of youth who are denied the very rights adults take for granted. The protests are being organized by two of the largest youth rights organizations in America: the National Youth Rights Association and YouthSpeak.

The National Youth Rights Association was formed in late 1996, and was incorporated in the state of Maryland in June 1998. From the Mission Statement: "The National Youth Rights Association is dedicated to defending the civil and human rights of young people in the United States. We believe certain basic rights are intrinsic parts of American citizenship and transcend age or status limits." NYRA attempts to advance the civil rights of young people through grassroots action, currently the group has over 300 members in most states in the country. The NYRA has three active local chapters with several more on the way.

YouthSpeak, founded in 1997 by a 15 year-old high school sophomore, boasts over 1000 members. It focuses solely on obtaining a lower voting age for young people worldwide. YouthSpeak held voting rights protests in four American cities on May 22, 1998. While most of YouthSpeak's membership is American, the group has members and supporters from as far away as Australia, Pakistan, The United Kingdom, Malaysia, and the Philippines.

These protests youth organized, grassroots movements. We are not being funded by any larger, adult led organizations. These protests are being organized at the local and state level by young people committed to youth rights and a lower voting age. Right now, we have over two dozen protests planned nationwide, from Minnesota to Texas, California to Maine, Florida to Guam. Dozens more are expected to be organized as the protest date gets closer. Please feel free to contact any of the contacts below for further information or to set up an interview. To find out if there's a protest in your market, or to just visit the protest web site, go to: <http://homestead.deja.com/user.youthrights/> We expect to be adding a permanent web site by October 16, at <http://www.lowerthevote.org>.

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Organizing Organizations:

National Youth Rights Association: <http://youth-rights.org/>
YouthSpeak: <http://www.oblivion.net/youthspeak/>