



Mayoral Proclamation

Recognizing the 30th Anniversary of Noncitizen Voting and 10th Anniversary of 16- and 17- Year Old Voting in Takoma Park

- WHEREAS, in 1992, after the narrow passage of a 1991 non-binding referendum, the City Council adopted Charter Amendment Resolution 1992-5A extending voting rights to noncitizen residents; and
- WHEREAS, in the Resolution, the City Council recognized that Takoma Park is a diverse community including people of many different nationalities, races and economic circumstances; and
- WHEREAS, the Council affirmed that all residents of the City have an equal interest in issues before City government and deserve an equal opportunity to fully participate and influence decisions that directly affect their lives; and
- WHEREAS, several small Montgomery County jurisdictions, including Barnesville, Martin's Additions, Somerset, and two Chevy Chase Villages, already allowed noncitizens to vote; and
- WHEREAS, the first Takoma Park election that included noncitizen voters took place 30 years ago, in November 1993; and
- WHEREAS, over the years many noncitizens in Takoma Park have registered and voted in City elections, and Takoma Park has been a model for other communities in Maryland and beyond seeking to extend voting rights to their noncitizen residents; and
- WHEREAS, in 2013, the City Council further increased access to City elections by enacting same day voter registration, allowing convicted felons to vote in City elections while serving their term of parole or probation, and lowering the voting age to 16; and
- WHEREAS, allowing 16 and 17-year olds to register and vote enables them to fully participate in City elections, thereby encouraging the establishment of a life-long habit of voting; and
- WHEREAS, Takoma Park was the first jurisdiction in the United States to lower the voting age to 16 and the first election, in November 2013, garnered national and even international attention; and
- WHEREAS, since then, six other Maryland municipalities have lowered their voting age, and there are efforts around the United States to extend voting rights to 16- and 17-year olds in local and state elections.
- NOW, THEREFORE, I, TALISHA SEARCY, MAYOR OF THE CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND, hereby recognize, with pride, Takoma Park's 30th anniversary of noncitizen voting and the 10th anniversary of 16- and 17-year old voting and encourage all eligible residents to register to vote and participate in every election.

Dated this 8th Day of November, 2023.

**Talisha Searcy
Mayor**