



7 People Under 35 Who Inspire Us to Reconsider the Age Requirement for President

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Article II, Section 1, Clause 5

It's there in the Constitution that the Framers, in their 18th-century wisdom, established the requirements of eligibility to be president of the United States: "*No Person except a natural born Citizen, or a Citizen of the United States, at the time of the Adoption of this Constitution, shall be eligible to the Office of President; neither shall any Person be eligible to that Office who shall not have attained to the Age of thirty five Years.*"

And that's how it's been for more than 220 years. But now that the largest living generation — some 75.4 million Americans (roughly 24% of the total U.S. population) — are millennials between ages 21 and 35, that rather arbitrary age requirement ought to be reconsidered.

If this generation has proven anything in the past decade or so, it's that youth has in no way hindered our ambitions to do great things and tackle big problems with creative solutions.

Which brings up the question: Is the age requirement hindering our ability to make political progress in this country? Here are seven young leaders who are working within the political system to represent the values and convictions of their generation, and challenging the outmoded notion that someone under 35 could not be an effective chief executive.

Elise Stefanik, 32

Stefanik is the youngest woman ever elected to Congress. A Republican representing New York's 21st district, she's a member of the Armed Services Committee and the Committee on Education and the Workforce. As soon as she got to Congress, Stefanik started working to get younger voices heard in government, including plans for a Millennial Task Force that will use technology to provide modern solutions to institutional problems.

Francisco Enriquez, 26

As the co-founder of Glasshouse Policy, a nonprofit think tank based in Austin, Texas, Enriquez spends his time advocating for citizens of the Austin community in the local and state government. Enriquez founded Glasshouse because he believes that people want to be a part of the political conversation and help shape public policy but don't have an easy way to do that. Glasshouse Policy holds forums, online discussions and events to get people involved in local politics. So far, Enriquez and his team have taken on local transportation issues, land use and local control in Austin and in surrounding communities.

Evan Low, 33

Low is one of the first openly gay Asian-American members of the California State Assembly. As the Democratic representative of the 28th district, which includes parts of Silicon Valley, Low is a passionate, active member of the State Assembly and has served as the Assistant Majority Whip. Just a few weeks ago, he spoke out against the Orlando shooting with other state assembly members, saying, "we will continue to advocate for the rights and dignity of humanity. ... We stand here today as a coalition to say enough is enough."

Sarah McBride, 25

McBride is a strong advocate for LGBTQ equality rights and legislation, and she's been pursuing this career path since she came out to her friends, family and fellow students as transgender on the last day of her student body presidential term. McBride is the first out transgender woman to work at the White House, and she now works as the national press secretary for the Human Rights Campaign. Before her current role, she worked with Equality Delaware to pass legislation banning discrimination on the basis of gender identity in housing, insurance and employment in her home state.

Alexander McCobin, 30

McCobin believes the issues his generation cares about deserve a platform and voice to get heard. McCobin co-founded and now serves as the president of Students for Liberty, the largest libertarian student organization in the world. The organization currently has over 400 leaders and over 1,300 student groups, which represents 50,000 students, according to the their website. Before Students for Liberty, McCobin worked at the libertarian Cato Institute and at another nonprofit that brought debate programs to high schools in the Philadelphia area.

Jorge Andres Soto, 28

Housing is one of the biggest issues that continues to increase segregation in communities, and Soto is working to fight those entrenched divisions. As the director of public policy at the National Fair Housing Alliance (NFHA), he helps the federal government create policies that make fair and affordable housing easier to access for everyone in the U.S. The NFHA is the only national civil rights organization dedicated to housing discrimination and related issues, including fair housing, home loans and insurance policies for all people.

Kaniela Ing, 27

The youngest elected official in Maui history, Kaniela Ing is a champion of sustainable development, environmental conservation, education and economic development. Since taking office in 2013, Ing has passed minimum wage legislation, same-day and online voter registration, secured the funds necessary for a community public high school and championed equal rights and the legalization of same-sex marriage. He has worked to disengage big money and special interest influence from Maui politics in an effort to foster more public trust in the government.