

Background guide

COMMITTEE LOKSABHA

◆ —◆ AGENDA ◆ —◆

SILENCED BY AGE: THE DELIBERATE EXCLUSION OF INDIA'S
YOUTH FROM PARLIAMENT AND THE CONSTITUTIONAL CASE
FOR LOWERING THE CANDIDATE AGE

Date: 31 July-1 August, 2026



Letter From Executive Board

Dear Delegates,

It is our pleasure to welcome you to the Lok Sabha Committee at DPS MUN Karnal. We are delighted to serve as your Executive Board and look forward to an engaging and meaningful committee session.

The agenda before the committee—

"Silenced by Age: The Deliberate Exclusion of India's Youth from Parliament and the Constitutional Case for Lowering the Candidate Age"

This focuses on an important constitutional and democratic issue. While Indian citizens can vote at the age of 18, they cannot contest Lok Sabha elections until they are 25. This difference has led to an ongoing debate about whether young people are being fairly represented in the country's highest legislative body.

India has one of the largest youth populations in the world. Young people are actively contributing to society, driving innovation, and participating in public discussions. However, their direct representation in Parliament remains limited. This committee will examine whether the current age requirement continues to serve the interests of democracy or whether it should be reconsidered to encourage greater youth participation in politics.

As delegates, you are expected to analyse the constitutional, political, and social aspects of the agenda with an open mind. We encourage you to support your arguments with research, respect differing viewpoints, and work towards practical and balanced solutions.

We hope this committee provides an opportunity for thoughtful debate, constructive discussion, and innovative policymaking. We wish you the very best and look forward to an exciting and productive session.

Warm Regards,

Executive Board
Lok Sabha Committee
DPS MUN Karnal

1. Introduction of Agenda and Committee Overview

India is the world's largest democracy and one of the youngest countries in terms of population. According to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), nearly 65% of India's population is below the age of 35, making India's youth its greatest demographic asset. This "demographic dividend" presents an unprecedented opportunity for economic growth, innovation, and democratic participation. However, despite forming a majority of the population and a significant share of the electorate, young Indians remain severely underrepresented in the country's highest legislative institution—the Lok Sabha.

The Constitution of India guarantees every citizen aged 18 years and above the right to vote under Article 326, a threshold reduced from 21 years through the 61st Constitutional Amendment Act, 1988. Yet, Article 84, read with the Representation of the People Act, 1951, requires a citizen to be at least 25 years old to contest elections to the Lok Sabha. This constitutional distinction raises a fundamental democratic question:

If an eighteen-year-old citizen is considered mature enough to choose the government, why is the same citizen not considered mature enough to become a legislator?

This committee is not merely debating a numerical change in age eligibility. Rather, it is examining the broader constitutional principles of political equality, representative democracy, participatory governance, and legislative competence. The agenda challenges delegates to evaluate whether the present age qualification continues to serve its intended purpose or has become an outdated restriction in a rapidly changing society.

Despite India's youthful demographic profile, Parliament remains comparatively older. Data from the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) indicates that in the 18th Lok Sabha (2024), only 7 of 542 Members of Parliament (1.3%) were aged 30 years or below, while 444 MPs (over 81%) were above the age of 45.

The underrepresentation of young people in Parliament has raised concerns that it does not adequately reflect the priorities of India's youth, such as employment, education, climate change, digital rights, AI, mental health, and entrepreneurship.

Proponents of lowering the minimum candidate age argue that voters, not constitutional age limits, should decide who is fit to lead. They believe the reform would improve youth representation, strengthen democratic legitimacy, and bring fresh ideas to policymaking.

Opponents argue that Parliament handles complex issues requiring experience and maturity, including national security and economic policy. They also contend that structural barriers—such as campaign finance, dynastic politics, criminalisation of politics, and weak internal party democracy—are the real obstacles to greater youth participation, rather than constitutional age requirements.

The committee must therefore determine whether lowering the minimum age alone would meaningfully enhance democratic representation or whether broader electoral reforms are equally necessary. In doing so, **delegates should examine constitutional principles, historical context, comparative international practices, empirical evidence, and India's evolving democratic aspirations.**

Ultimately, this agenda asks a fundamental constitutional question: Should age continue to function as a legal barrier to political representation, or should India's constitutional framework evolve to ensure that the world's youngest major democracy is represented by a Parliament that better reflects its people?

3: Historical Evolution of Youth Representation in India

Introduction

The debate over lowering the minimum age to contest Lok Sabha elections can only be understood by examining the historical context in which India's Constitution was framed. When the Constitution came into force on 26 January 1950, India had just emerged from colonial rule, Partition, and widespread social and economic instability. The framers of the Constitution believed that legislative office required maturity, experience, and sound judgment, leading them to prescribe a minimum age of 25 years for candidates contesting Lok Sabha elections under Article 84.

However, India has changed dramatically over the past seven decades. With rising literacy, technological advancement, and greater political awareness among young people, many argue that the rationale behind the age restriction deserves reconsideration.

Youth in the Freedom Struggle

Ironically, India's independence movement was driven largely by young leaders. Revolutionaries like Bhagat Singh (23), Chandrashekhhar Azad (24), and Khudiram Bose (18) became symbols of resistance at remarkably young ages. Students also played a vital role in the Non-Cooperation Movement (1920), Civil Disobedience Movement (1930), and Quit India Movement (1942). This demonstrates that youth have historically been central to India's political transformation.

Constituent Assembly and the Age Requirement

The Constituent Assembly (1946–49) consisted of 299 members, with an average age of around 45–50 years. While debating qualifications for Parliament, members emphasized the need for legislators to possess political maturity and administrative experience. Consequently, the Constitution fixed the minimum age at 25 years for the Lok Sabha, 30 years for the Rajya Sabha, and 35 years for the offices of President and Vice-President.

The decision reflected the realities of the time. According to the 1951 Census, India's literacy rate was only 18.3%, and democratic institutions were still in their infancy. The framers believed that older representatives would provide greater stability to the newly independent Republic.

Changing Democratic Landscape

India's political landscape evolved significantly after independence. Student-led movements such as the JP Movement (1974) and the Anti-Emergency protests (1975–77) highlighted the growing political consciousness of young Indians. Recognising this shift, Parliament passed the 61st Constitutional Amendment Act, 1988, reducing the voting age from 21 to 18 years. The amendment acknowledged that young citizens had acquired sufficient political awareness to participate in elections. However, the minimum age for contesting elections remained unchanged.

Youth Representation Today

India is now the world's youngest major democracy. According to the Election Commission of India, over 96.8 crore (968 million) voters were registered for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, including millions of first-time voters. Yet, youth representation in Parliament remains limited. Data from the Inter-Parliamentary Union (2024) shows that only 7 out of 542 MPs (1.3%) in the 18th Lok Sabha are aged 30 years or below, while over 81% are above 45 years.

This contrast between a youthful electorate and an ageing legislature has intensified demands for constitutional reform.

The committee must therefore consider whether the age qualification established in 1950 continues to serve India's democracy or whether it should evolve to reflect the aspirations and capabilities of a younger generation.

Key Data

Literacy Rate (1951): 18.3% (Census of India, 1951)

Voting Age: Reduced from 21 to 18 by the 61st Constitutional Amendment Act, 1988

Registered Voters (2024): 96.8 crore (Election Commission of India)

MPs aged 30 or below: 7 of 542 (1.3%) (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2024)

4: Constitutional and Legal Framework

Age Qualifications for Parliamentary Elections in India

The eligibility criteria for becoming a Member of Parliament in India are governed by the Constitution of India and the Representation of the People Act, 1951. The current debate regarding lowering the minimum age for contesting Lok Sabha elections is directly connected to these legal provisions. At present, a person must be at least 25 years old to contest elections to the Lok Sabha. The committee must examine whether this age requirement continues to remain suitable in modern India or whether constitutional reform is necessary to increase youth participation in politics.

Article 84 of the Constitution of India lays down the qualifications required for membership of Parliament. It states that a person must be an Indian citizen, must take the prescribed oath or affirmation, and must fulfil the minimum age requirement. For the Lok Sabha, the minimum age is 25 years, while for the Rajya Sabha it is 30 years. The difference exists because the Rajya Sabha was designed as a chamber of experienced representatives, whereas the Lok Sabha directly represents the people.

Article 102 of the Constitution deals with disqualification from membership of Parliament. A person can be disqualified for reasons such as holding an office of profit under the government, being declared of unsound mind by a court, being an undischarged insolvent, losing Indian citizenship, or being disqualified under laws made by Parliament. These provisions ensure that only legally eligible individuals can become lawmakers.

The issue of youth participation is closely connected with Article 326, which provides for elections based on universal adult suffrage. Originally, Indian citizens could vote only after attaining the age of 21 years. However, through the 61st Constitutional Amendment Act, 1988, the voting age was reduced to 18 years.

The 61st Constitutional Amendment Act, 1988 reduced the voting age in India from 21 to 18 years to promote greater democratic participation by recognizing the political awareness of young citizens. However, the minimum age to contest Lok Sabha elections remains 25 years, while for Rajya Sabha elections it is 30 years, as provided under the Constitution and the Representation of the People Act, 1951 (RPA). **Any proposal to reduce the minimum age for Lok Sabha candidates requires a Constitutional Amendment under Article 368, which must be passed by a special majority in both Houses of Parliament and receive the President's assent.** The issue raises constitutional questions of equality, youth representation, and representative democracy. Supporters argue that if 18-year-olds can vote, they should also have the right to contest elections, leaving competence to voters. Opponents contend that parliamentary duties demand greater maturity, experience, and understanding of governance, making age-based qualifications reasonable and necessary.

The Supreme Court has consistently upheld free and fair elections as a basic feature of democracy. In **Indira Gandhi v. Raj Narain (1975)** and **Association for Democratic Reforms v. Union of India (2002)**, it emphasized electoral fairness, transparency, and informed citizen participation. **Although it has not ruled on lowering the minimum age for candidates, its judgments support meaningful democratic participation. The debate over reducing the candidature age is therefore about balancing greater youth representation with the need to preserve the effectiveness, stability, and responsible functioning of Parliament.**



5: Constituent Assembly Debates and the Original Intent Behind Age Qualifications

Introduction

The decision to establish a minimum age requirement for contesting elections was made during the framing of the Constitution of India (1946–1949). The Constituent Assembly had the responsibility of designing a democratic system suitable for a newly independent nation facing challenges such as poverty, low literacy, social divisions, and limited administrative experience. The age qualifications for political offices reflected the Assembly's belief that elected representatives required a certain level of maturity, judgment, and understanding of public affairs.

The debate over lowering the candidate age today requires an understanding of why the framers originally selected 25 years for the Lok Sabha and whether those reasons remain relevant in present-day India.

Constituent Assembly's Approach Towards Political Qualifications

The members of the Constituent Assembly believed that democracy required not only the participation of citizens but also responsible leadership. While they strongly supported universal adult franchise, they also recognised that holding public office involved greater responsibilities than simply voting.

The framers created different age requirements for different constitutional positions:

Lok Sabha membership: 25 years

Rajya Sabha membership: 30 years

President and Vice-President: 35 years

These differences were based on the idea that higher constitutional offices required greater experience and maturity.

The Lok Sabha, being the directly elected House representing the people, was given the lowest age qualification among major constitutional offices.

Reasons Behind Choosing 25 Years

1. Social Conditions of 1950

When the Constitution was adopted, India was facing enormous challenges. The country had recently experienced Partition, economic difficulties, and social instability. The literacy rate according to the 1951 Census was only 18.3%, meaning a large part of the population had limited access to formal education.

The framers believed that individuals entering Parliament needed sufficient education, awareness, and experience to understand complex issues of governance.

2. Need for Political Maturity

The Constituent Assembly believed that lawmakers would be responsible for:

- Creating national policies
- Passing legislation
- Managing public resources
- Protecting constitutional values
- Representing citizens' interests

Therefore, they considered age as one possible indicator of maturity and decision-making ability.

The assumption was that by the age of 25, individuals would have gained greater social awareness, professional experience, and understanding of public issues.

3. Experience in Public Affairs

Many members of the Constituent Assembly themselves had decades of political experience through the freedom movement, provincial legislatures, and public administration.

Leaders such as Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, and Rajendra Prasad had spent many years in political and constitutional activities before assuming national leadership roles.

Their experiences influenced the belief that governance required preparation and practical knowledge.

4. The Present Constitutional Debate

Supporters of reform argue that the Constitution must remain a living document capable of adapting to social changes. They believe that the framers created the age requirement according to the circumstances of their era and that modern India requires greater youth inclusion.

Opponents argue that the principles of maturity and experience remain important regardless of technological and social progress. They believe that Parliament deals with highly complex matters and that some minimum age requirement is necessary.

Conclusion

The Constituent Assembly's decision to set the minimum age for Lok Sabha candidates at 25 years was based on the historical realities of post-independence India. The framers sought to balance democratic participation with the need for experienced leadership.

International Perspective

Different democracies have adopted different approaches regarding candidate age.

Country	Age
United Kingdom	18 Years
Canada	18 Years
Germany	18 Years
France	18 Years
Australia	18 Years
Newzeland	18 Years
India	25 Years
U.S.A	25 Years

Countries that allow younger candidates argue that democratic systems should allow voters to decide whether a candidate is capable, rather than creating strict age-based barriers.

Beyond Age: Structural Barriers to Youth Participation

Although lowering the candidate age may increase opportunities, it cannot alone guarantee youth representation.

Several other challenges exist:

1. Campaign Finance

Electoral politics requires significant financial resources. Young candidates without strong financial backgrounds often struggle to compete.

The Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) reported that the average assets of winning candidates in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections exceeded ₹46 crore, highlighting the financial challenges of entering electoral politics.

2. Political Dynasties

Political families often possess established networks, party connections, and resources, making entry difficult for first-generation politicians.

3. Limited Internal Party Democracy

Many political parties lack transparent mechanisms for selecting candidates, which can restrict opportunities for young leaders.

Therefore, meaningful youth representation requires both:

Key Arguments Emerging From Global Comparison

Argument 1: Lower Age Encourages Democratic Inclusion

Countries with an 18-year threshold argue that:

Young citizens are already responsible enough to vote.

Political competence cannot be measured only by age.

More candidates create more democratic choices.

This approach treats elections as a process where voters determine suitability.

Argument 2: Higher Age Ensures Legislative Experience

Countries maintaining higher limits argue that:

Lawmaking requires specialised knowledge.

Government decisions affect millions of lives.

Experience can improve policy-making.

This approach prioritises institutional stability.

Lessons for India

The international comparison suggests that there is no universal standard for candidate age. Different democracies have chosen different approaches based on their constitutional traditions and political cultures.

However, several lessons emerge:

1. Age Reduction Alone Is Not Enough

Countries with younger candidates often combine age reforms with:

Strong political parties

Leadership training

Transparent elections

2. Political Institutions Matter

A lower age limit creates opportunity, but parties must also provide genuine chances to young candidates.

3. Democracy Requires Trust

Countries allowing 18-year-old candidates place trust in citizens to evaluate leadership ability through elections.

Conclusion

The global experience demonstrates two competing democratic philosophies:

The Experience Model:

A Higher minimum age ensures that representatives possess maturity and political understanding.

The Participation Model:

A lower minimum age ensures maximum inclusion and allows voters to decide a candidate's capability.

India currently follows the experience-based model by requiring Lok Sabha candidates to be at least 25 years old. However, with a population of over 370 million young people and a rapidly changing society, the debate over whether this threshold should be revised has gained importance.

Important Supreme Court Judgments

1. Indira Nehru Gandhi v. Raj Narain (1975)

Free and Fair Elections as the Basic Structure of the Constitution

This landmark case arose after Raj Narain challenged Indira Gandhi's election victory in 1971. The Supreme Court examined whether Parliament could amend laws to protect election disputes from judicial review. The Court held that free and fair elections are a part of the Basic Structure of the Constitution and cannot be destroyed by constitutional amendments. It emphasized that democracy requires genuine elections, accountability, and citizens' freedom to choose representatives. For the youth representation debate, the case supports the idea that democracy must provide meaningful political participation to all sections of society.

2. Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) v. Union of India (2002)

Right of Voters to Know Candidate Information

This case dealt with whether voters have the right to know information about candidates contesting elections. The Supreme Court held that citizens have a fundamental right to obtain information about candidates, including their criminal background, educational qualifications, and financial details. The Court linked this right with Article 19(1)(a), the freedom of speech and expression, stating that informed voting is essential for democracy. The judgment strengthened transparency and accountability in elections. For youth representation, it highlights that modern citizens, including young voters, are capable of making informed political decisions.

3. PUCL v. Union of India (2003)

Transparency and Informed Electoral Participation

The People's Union for Civil Liberties challenged restrictions placed on voters' access to candidate information. The Supreme Court reaffirmed that voters have the right to know relevant details about candidates before making electoral choices. The Court stated that democracy depends on informed participation and transparency. The judgment strengthened the connection between citizens' awareness and democratic accountability. In the context of youth participation, this case supports the argument that young citizens today possess political awareness through education and technology and should have greater opportunities to participate actively in democratic institutions.

4. Kihoto Hollohan v. Zachillhu (1992)

Parliamentary Stability and Responsible Representation

This case examined the constitutional validity of the Tenth Schedule (Anti-Defection Law), introduced to prevent elected representatives from changing parties for personal benefits. The Supreme Court upheld the law and recognized that parliamentary democracy requires stability, discipline, and responsible conduct by elected representatives. The judgment emphasized that Members of Parliament hold important constitutional responsibilities. Regarding the age debate, opponents of lowering the candidate age argue that parliamentary duties require experience and maturity. Supporters, however, argue that responsibility should be judged through capability rather than age alone.

5. Lily Thomas v. Union of India (2013)

Integrity and Accountability of Representatives

This case concerned the disqualification of convicted legislators. The Supreme Court struck down a provision that allowed convicted lawmakers to continue in office while their appeals were pending. The Court held that elected representatives must maintain high standards of integrity and accountability. The judgment strengthened public trust in democratic institutions by ensuring that criminal convictions have consequences for lawmakers. For the youth representation debate, the case demonstrates that suitability for political office depends on factors such as ethics, competence, and responsibility rather than age alone. It supports the need for overall electoral reforms.

6. People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) v. Union of India (2004)

Right to Reject and Electoral Choice

In this case, the Supreme Court examined the importance of voter choice and electoral freedom. The Court recognized that democracy requires citizens to have meaningful options while participating in elections. It emphasized the importance of transparency and accountability in the electoral process.

The judgment contributed to strengthening the role of voters in evaluating candidates. In the context of youth representation, the case supports the principle that citizens should have wider choices, including younger candidates, if they are considered capable by voters.

Solutions and Policy Recommendations: Creating a More Inclusive, Transparent, and Youth-Oriented Political System in India

Introduction

The debate on reducing the minimum age for contesting Lok Sabha elections from 25 years to 18 years cannot be addressed only through a constitutional amendment. While lowering the age limit may provide more opportunities for young citizens to enter politics, meaningful youth representation requires reforms that remove the deeper structural barriers existing within the political system. India has one of the largest youth populations in the world, with approximately 65% of its population below the age of 35, according to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). However, the presence of young people in legislative institutions remains limited. Therefore, the objective should not only be to create a younger Parliament but to develop a political system where young citizens have equal opportunities, proper training, and fair competition.

1. Constitutional Reform: Reducing the Minimum Age for Lok Sabha Candidates

The primary proposal is to amend Article 84(b) of the Constitution of India, which currently requires a person to be at least 25 years of age to contest elections for the Lok Sabha. Supporters argue that the age requirement should be reduced to 18 years because Indian citizens already receive voting rights at the age of 18 through the 61st Constitutional Amendment Act, 1988.

The argument behind this reform is based on democratic equality. If an 18-year-old citizen is considered capable of choosing representatives and influencing government formation, supporters believe that the same citizen should also have the opportunity to become a representative. However, any reduction in age should be accompanied by measures ensuring that young candidates possess adequate knowledge of constitutional principles, governance, and legislative responsibilities.

2. Introducing Political Education and Leadership Training

Reducing the candidate age should be supported by strong political education programmes. Becoming a Member of Parliament requires understanding complex subjects such as constitutional law, public policy, budgeting, international relations, and parliamentary procedures.

Young citizens should receive structured training through universities, civil society organisations, and legislative institutions. Programmes focusing on constitutional awareness, debate skills, public administration, and policy-making can prepare future leaders.

3. Strengthening Internal Democracy Within Political Parties

Political parties are the most important pathway through which candidates enter elections. Therefore, increasing youth representation requires reforms within political parties themselves. Many young political workers face difficulties in receiving election opportunities because candidate selection is often controlled by senior leadership structures. To address this issue, political parties should introduce transparent systems for selecting candidates, internal elections, leadership development programmes, and merit-based promotions.

4. Campaign Finance Reform to Reduce Money Power

One of the biggest obstacles faced by young candidates is the high cost of elections. Campaigning requires resources for public meetings, advertisements, digital campaigns, transportation, and organisational activities.

According to the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) analysis of the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, 504 out of 543 elected Members of Parliament were crorepatis, and the average declared assets of winning candidates were approximately ₹46.34 crore. This demonstrates the significant role of financial resources in electoral success.

To create equal opportunities for young candidates, India requires stronger campaign finance reforms, including greater transparency in political donations, monitoring of election expenditure, and mechanisms that allow candidates with limited resources to compete fairly.

5. Creating Institutional Platforms for Youth Participation

Youth participation should not begin only during elections. Young citizens should have opportunities to engage with governance before entering electoral politics.

The government and institutions can establish:

Youth advisory councils

Parliamentary internship programmes

Policy discussion forums

Leadership development initiatives

Such platforms would allow young people to understand policymaking processes and provide policymakers with insights into issues affecting younger generations.

Countries with strong youth participation mechanisms often use youth councils and advisory institutions to connect young citizens with decision-making structures.

6. Addressing Criminalization of Politics

A major challenge in Indian democracy is the presence of candidates with criminal backgrounds. According to the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) analysis of the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, approximately 46% of elected MPs had declared criminal cases against themselves, while around 31% faced serious criminal charges.

Criminalization of politics creates an unequal environment where candidates with strong networks and resources may have advantages over honest and inexperienced candidates, including young leaders.

7. Promoting Youth and Women's Political Participation

Youth representation should also focus on improving participation among young women. Although women constitute nearly half of India's population, their representation in Parliament has historically remained limited.

Young women face additional challenges, including social barriers, lack of resources, and limited political networks. The Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, 2023 represents an important constitutional step toward increasing women's representation in legislatures by providing for reservation of seats for women after the delimitation process.

8. Establishing Mentorship Programmes Between Senior and Young Leaders

A balanced democratic system requires cooperation between generations. Young leaders bring innovation, technological awareness, and new perspectives, while experienced leaders provide institutional knowledge and practical understanding of governance.

Mentorship programmes connecting experienced parliamentarians with young political workers can help transfer knowledge and develop future leadership.

Such a system would prevent the debate from becoming a conflict between youth and experience and instead create cooperation between both groups.

9. Strengthening Civic Education

A successful democracy depends not only on capable candidates but also informed voters.

Civic education should be strengthened in schools and universities to improve understanding of:

The Constitution

Rights and duties of citizens

Electoral processes

Parliamentary democracy

An informed electorate can evaluate candidates based on ability, integrity, and policies rather than age, popularity, or financial influence.

Source: Election Commission of India – SVEEP (Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation) Programme

10. Maintaining a Balance Between Youth and Experience

While increasing youth participation is important, governance also requires experience and institutional knowledge. Young representatives can contribute fresh ideas, technological understanding, and awareness of future challenges, while experienced representatives provide stability and administrative expertise.

Therefore, the ideal solution is not replacing experienced leaders with younger ones but creating a Parliament that represents different generations.

A healthy democracy should combine: The energy and innovation of youth

The wisdom and experience of senior leadership

Conclusion

Reducing the minimum age for contesting Lok Sabha elections may become an important step toward increasing youth participation, but it cannot be the only solution. The real challenge is creating a political environment where young citizens have equal opportunities to enter politics, receive proper training, compete fairly, and contribute effectively.

A comprehensive reform approach should include constitutional discussion, political education, party reforms, campaign finance transparency, and stronger democratic institutions.

The ultimate goal should not simply be a younger Parliament, but a Parliament that is:

Representative, capable, transparent, and accountable.

A democracy succeeds when every generation has both the opportunity and the ability to shape the future of the nation.

