

national

politics

Stuff, 2020a

2019

ADVERTISEMENT
Advertise with
Stuff

Judge knocks back campaign to lower the voting age to 16

Wellington higher courts reporter · 18:06, Oct 07 2020

RNZ

The Make it 16 organisation has taken its case to lower the voting age to the High Court in Wellington.

Trustworthy, accurate and reliable news stories are more important now than ever. Support our newsrooms by **making a contribution**.

A campaign to lower the voting age to 16 has failed to win over a judge in a preliminary legal argument seeking to advance the cause.

politics

Any decision to lower the minimum voting age would be for Parliament to make but a judge's declaration would have helped clarify the law.

In a decision issued from the High Court in Wellington on Wednesday, Justice Jan-Marie Doogue said restricting voting to people aged 18 was a justified limit on the right not to be subject to age discrimination.

READ MORE:

- * **The Detail: Teen campaign says lowering voting age would lead to a 'stronger and fairer democracy'**
- * **Campaign for voting at 16 and 17, claims age discrimination**
- * **Election 2020: One month delay hundreds of young people now able to vote in upcoming election**
- * **'Make it 16' campaign launches, taking case of voting rights of 16-year-olds to court**

She said other New Zealand laws put the line between adults and children at 18 years, it was within the range of reasonable alternatives, and the vast majority of countries had a voting age of 18.

ADVERTISEMENT
Advertisement
Stuff

The issues were complex and wide-ranging policy work would be needed before it could be decided that the age to vote could be changed, she said.

The law was contradictory in saying that the right to vote was guaranteed in the Bill of Rights for citizens 18 years and older, but the right not to be subject to age discrimination applied to those aged 16 and over.

A vote in the 2020 general election included having a say on referenda on legalising recreational use of cannabis and end of life choice.