

Hello, my name is Amanda Hartzell and I am a senior at Nazareth Area High School. I am a Democrat and a member of Nazareth's Students for Political Action Club. I am a member of the club because I know the value of voting and political action. I appreciate the power of the vote and the people's right to choose. My birth date is April 29<sup>th</sup> – exactly one week after the primary election. This makes me, by Pennsylvania election laws, ineligible to choose which Democratic candidate I would like to see face off against Republican Senator John McCain. Since I am voting in the presidential election, I would like to be able to choose my candidate. This election offers a great choice of candidates, and voters like me are watching and anxious to vote. The race between Senators Barrack Obama and Hillary Clinton is very close and could fall within thousands or even hundreds of votes to decide a winner before the convention. The election of 2000 reminds us that every vote counts. The right to choose counts as well. I am one of the voters, that is being denied the right to choose my candidate. More and more of the younger voting population is choosing to have a say in their government – the percentage of young voters in PA is 63%, up 15% from 2000. Losing the right to choose a candidate in a race this close can damage those hopeful statistics. I don't think that I, as an American citizen, should be denied to vote in the primary election because I was born a week too late. Our system should welcome would-be November voters into the primary process if their birthdates exclude them from primary registration. I am frustrated by our current system. If the candidate of my choice is not in the November election, being excluded from the primary process, I would not be so motivated to vote for someone else's candidate. Exclusion from the process can turn many voters away. This is a huge moment in history and I would definitely like to be a part of it. Remember, one vote CAN make a difference, and behind the right to vote is the right to choose.