



COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
JOHN A. WILSON BUILDING
1350 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20004

MATTHEW FRUMIN
Councilmember, Ward 3

COMMITTEE MEMBER
Executive Administration and Labor
Facilities and Family Services
Hospital and Health Equity
Housing
Transportation and the Environment

Nyasha Smith
Secretary of the Council
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20004

February 21, 2023

Dear Secretary Smith:

Today, I am introducing the “Sense of the Council on the Establishment of an America250 Commission Resolution of 2023” along with Councilmembers Gray, Lewis George, R. White, McDuffie, Pinto, Parker, and Henderson. This resolution urges the Mayor to establish an America250 Commission for the District of Columbia, charged with highlighting the complete story of the District within our national history. A signed copy of the resolution is enclosed.

On July 4, 2026, millions of Americans will celebrate the semiquincentennial anniversary of the nation’s founding. These 250th anniversary celebrations must embrace an honest, inclusive history that acknowledges the triumphs of the American experiment and the still unrealized promises of equality, opportunity, and self-governance. The Mayor should partner with the Council in planning for this anniversary and establishing a commission to promote our shared goals of commemorating the entire history of the District and amplifying our fight for DC Statehood.

By establishing an America250 Commission for the District, we can ensure the 250th anniversary celebration recognizes DC as more than the seat of the Federal government. With adequate planning, education, and advocacy, the District will instead be memorialized as the home of revered local cultural, social, and political leaders and the backdrop of countless watershed moments in our nation’s history. DC’s story is America’s story. Therefore, the Mayor should establish an America250 Commission to elevate our city’s diverse history and culture.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Matthew Frumin".

Matthew Frumin
Councilmember for Ward 3

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1 Vincent C. Gray

2 Councilmember Vincent C. Gray

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5 R.C. White, Jr.

6 Councilmember Robert C. White, Jr.

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9 BE Pinto

10 Councilmember Brooke Pinto

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13 Christina Henderson

14 Councilmember Christina Henderson

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16 Matthew Frumin

17 Councilmember Matthew Frumin

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19 Janeese Lewis George

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22 Kenyan R. McDuffie

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26 Zachary Parker

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A PROPOSED RESOLUTION

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

To declare the sense of the Council that the Mayor should, in consultation with the Council, establish a commission to plan for the celebration of the 250th anniversary of the nation’s founding; and, that in its planning, the commission should embrace the complete history of the District and amplify the fight for statehood.

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the “Sense of the Council on the Establishment of an America250 Commission Resolution of 2023”.

Sec. 2. The Council finds that:

(1) On July 4th, 2026, the United States and the District will celebrate the 250th anniversary of the founding of the nation (known as the “Semiquincentennial”) as marked by the ratification of the Declaration of Independence in 1776. The Declaration of Independence, and the historic events preceding its signing, have had a profound influence throughout the world.

40 (2) The ideals articulated in the Declaration of Independence—that all people are created
41 equal and that government derives its power from the consent of the governed—are especially
42 meaningful to the residents of the District of Columbia, who still lack representation in the
43 United States Congress as well as full autonomy over their local affairs.

44 (3) To celebrate the 250th anniversary of the founding, tens of thousands of visitors will
45 travel to the District. This presents the District with a unique opportunity to tell its complete
46 story and to showcase that it is more than the seat of federal government, but rather a thriving
47 and diverse city worthy of statehood.

48 (4) In 2016, Congress established the U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission to “provide
49 for the observance and commemoration of the 250th anniversary . . . through local, State,
50 national, and international activities.”

51 (5) The federal Commission’s goal is that every state, territory, and the District will form
52 a state-level America250 commission by the end of 2023. Currently, 21 states have formed, or
53 are in the process of forming, such commissions.

54 Sec. 3. It is the sense of the Council that:

55 (1) The Mayor should establish an America250 Commission for the District of Columbia,
56 composed of members appointed by both the Mayor and the Council;

57 (2) In leading the planning for the 250th anniversary, the Mayor should, in consultation
58 with the Council, ensure that the Commission is attuned to the goal of strategically telling the
59 District’s story to emphasize the history of the District and the nation;

60 (3) In its planning, the Commission should be directed to go beyond merely celebrating
61 the 250th anniversary of the nation’s founding and rather to commemorate the entire history of
62 the District—from the local cultural, social, and political leaders who helped shape the nation’s

63 history to the difficult histories of racism, slavery, and segregation central to the stories of both
64 the District and the broader nation;

65 (4) To further this goal, the Commission should include:

66 (A) Experts on the history of Black culture, identity, and political power at the
67 core of the movements for home rule and statehood in the District;

68 (B) Local historians, statehood advocates, and leaders in the arts, culture, and
69 philanthropy;

70 (C) Representatives from the University of the District of Columbia, the
71 Historical Society of Washington, D.C., and the District of Columbia Archives;

72 (D) Representatives from District civic associations and Main Streets; and

73 (E) Representatives from Events DC, the New Columbia Statehood Commission,
74 and the DC Public Library;

75 (5) In selecting the members of the commission, the Mayor and Council should ensure
76 that all eight Wards of the District are represented, and that the commission is reflective of
77 diverse and historically marginalized voices from across the District; and

78 (6) The Mayor and the Council should prepare to adequately fund the commemoration of
79 the 250th anniversary. Further, the Mayor should include necessary funds for the commission in
80 her proposed Fiscal Year 2024 budget.

81 Sec. 4. The Secretary to the Council shall transmit copies of this resolution, upon its
82 adoption, to the Mayor.

83 Sec. 5. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon the first date of publication in
84 the District of Columbia Register.