
SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 8005

State of Washington

67th Legislature

2021 Regular Session

By Senators Lias and Kuderer

1 WHEREAS, The people living on the land that would eventually be
2 designated as the District of Columbia were provided the right to
3 vote for representation in Congress when the United States
4 Constitution was ratified in 1788; and

5 WHEREAS, The passage of the Organic Act of 1801 placed the
6 District of Columbia under the exclusive authority of the United
7 States Congress and abolished residents' right to vote for Members of
8 Congress and the President and Vice President of the United States;
9 and

10 WHEREAS, Residents of the District of Columbia were granted the
11 right to vote for the President and Vice President through passage of
12 the 23rd Amendment to the United States Constitution in 1961; and

13 WHEREAS, As of 2020, the United States Census Bureau data
14 estimates that the District of Columbia's population at approximately
15 712,000 residents is comparable to the populations of Wyoming
16 (582,000), Vermont (623,000), Alaska (731,000), and North Dakota
17 (765,000); and

18 WHEREAS, Residents of the District of Columbia share all the
19 responsibilities of United States citizenship, including paying more
20 federal taxes than residents of 22 states, service on federal juries,
21 and defending the United States as members of the United States armed
22 forces in every war since the War for Independence, yet they are
23 denied full representation in Congress; and

1 WHEREAS, The residents of the District of Columbia themselves
2 have endorsed statehood for the District of Columbia and passed a
3 district-wide referendum on November 8, 2016, which favored statehood
4 by 86 percent; and

5 WHEREAS, No other democratic nation denies the right of self-
6 government, including participation in its national legislature, to
7 the residents of its capital; and

8 WHEREAS, The residents of the District of Columbia lack full
9 democracy, equality, and citizenship enjoyed by the residents of the
10 50 states; and

11 WHEREAS, The United States Congress repeatedly has interfered
12 with the District of Columbia's limited self-government by enacting
13 laws that affect the District of Columbia's expenditure of its
14 locally raised tax revenue, including barring the usage of locally
15 raised revenue, thus violating the fundamental principle that states
16 and local governments are best suited to enact legislation that
17 represents the will of their citizens; and

18 WHEREAS, Although the District of Columbia has passed consecutive
19 balanced budgets since fiscal year 1997, it still faces the
20 possibility of being shut down yearly because of congressional
21 deliberations over the federal budget; and

22 WHEREAS, District of Columbia Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton and
23 Delaware United States Senator Tom Carper introduced in the 117th
24 Congress H.R. 51 and S. 51, the Washington, D.C. Admission Act, that
25 provides that the state of Washington, D.C., would have all the
26 rights of citizenship as taxpaying American citizens, including two
27 senators and at least one house member; and

28 WHEREAS, The United Nations Human Rights Committee has called on
29 the United States Congress to address the District of Columbia's lack
30 of political equality, and the Organization of American States has
31 declared the disenfranchisement of the District of Columbia residents
32 a violation of its charter agreement, to which the United States is a
33 signatory;

34 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the members of the United
35 States Congress are urged to enact federal legislation granting
36 statehood to the people of Washington, D.C.; and

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Senate of the state of
2 Washington support admitting Washington, D.C., into the Union as a
3 state of the United States of America.

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