



NANCY PELOSI
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

FACT SHEET
FROM SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE NANCY PELOSI
SPEAKER.GOV

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H.R. 51, The Washington, D.C. Admission Act

Key Points:

- The State of Washington, Douglass Commonwealth would consist of 66 of the 68 square miles of the present-day federal district. The remaining two square miles would comprise the federal district – the “Capital” – and would include the White House, Capitol, Supreme Court, principal federal monuments, and federal buildings adjacent to the National Mall.
- The Constitution gives Congress the authority to admit new states. All 37 states added to the original 13 were admitted by simple legislation – none by constitutional amendment. The Constitution sets a maximum size of the federal district (100 square miles). It does not set a minimum size. Congress previously reduced the size of the federal district by 30 percent in 1846. The 23rd Amendment permits the federal district to participate in the Electoral College, but does not set a minimum size of the federal district. This bill repeals the enabling legislation for the 23rd Amendment and the Amendment would likely be swiftly repealed after the new state is admitted into the Union.
- There are no prerequisites in the Constitution for new states, but Congress generally has considered three factors in evaluating new states: commitment to democracy; support for statehood; and resources and population. D.C. complies with each of these factors:
 - D.C. residents have been petitioning for voting representation in Congress and local self-government for more than 200 years. Most recently, in November 2016, 86 percent of D.C. residents voted for statehood.
 - D.C. residents pay more federal taxes than 21 states and more per capita than any state; furthermore, the per capita personal income and gross domestic product is higher in D.C. than in any state.
 - D.C.’s budget is larger than 12 states. Its bonds have the highest rating from Moody’s Investors Service – higher than 32 states. And it has a population larger than two states.
- The State of Washington, Douglass Commonwealth would elect two senators and, based on its population, one representative to Congress. These members would have the same voting and representational rights as members from every other state in the Union.

- In the last year, there have been three prominent examples of why D.C. needs statehood:
 - In the CARES Act, each state received a minimum of \$1.25 billion in fiscal relief. D.C. was treated as a territory and received only \$495 million.
 - The D.C. mayor was not able to deploy the D.C. National Guard to the Capitol during the January 6, 2021, insurrection, because the President controls the D.C. National Guard.
 - President Trump deployed thousands of federal law enforcement officers and National Guard troops in downtown D.C. against area residents engaging in constitutionally protected protests.
- Congressional Republicans oppose D.C. statehood on the grounds that the elected representatives in the House and Senate could be Democrats. The right of American citizens to have voting representation in Congress should not be dependent on the political parties of those citizens. The possibility that new Members of Congress might be from a different political party is not a valid basis to deny statehood.
- The Biden White House issued a [Statement of Administration Policy strongly supporting H.R. 51](#): *"The Administration strongly supports H.R. 51, the Washington, D.C. Admission Act... Establishing the State of Washington, Douglass Commonwealth as the 51st state will make our Union stronger and more just. Washington, D.C. has a robust economy, a rich culture, and a diverse population of Americans from all walks of life who are entitled to full and equal participation in our democracy.... The Administration calls for the Congress to provide for a swift and orderly transition to statehood for the people of Washington, D.C."*
- There is broad, overwhelming support for D.C. statehood from civil rights, religious, labor and community organizations.

SELECTED QUOTES IN SUPPORT OF D.C. STATEHOOD

200+ Organizations in Support of D.C. Statehood

Our nation has a rich legacy of continuing to expand equal representation. Each step in the history of making our democracy available to more and more people resulted in a stronger nation, a fairer nation, one that more closely upholds the true values of our democracy. The status of Statehood for the people of DC is unfinished business of that legacy. It is unfinished business of the civil rights movement. It is the unfinished business of the original effort to end tyranny through taxation without representation. It is time to move forward to full democracy truly for all. This Congress can make the 712,000 residents of Washington, DC full members of the American story by passing H.R. 51, the Washington, D.C. Admission Act. We, the undersigned organizations, join in support of DC Statehood and urge the Congress to vote in favor of H.R. 51. (April 19, 2021)

American Civil Liberties Union

Continued congressional control of the District of Columbia and its residents undermines the fundamental principle of self-government and is antithetical to a free society. Congressional interference in D.C.'s autonomy has had disastrous consequences for the health and welfare of District residents. Congress has an opportunity to rectify a great injustice that has left hundreds of thousands of Americans in the District of Columbia unable to fully participate in our representative democracy. Disenfranchised District residents deserve full representation in Congress, and the true autonomy and self-governance that comes with statehood. (March 22, 2021)

Constitutional Accountability Center

Consistent with the principles upon which this country was founded, Congress should pass the Washington, D.C. Admission Act to give D.C. residents full voting rights, meaningful political representation in Congress, and control over their local affairs. The bill is an exercise of Congress's express constitutional power to add new states to our nation by enacting simple legislation—a power it has used repeatedly throughout history—and to adjust the borders of the seat of government. (March 19, 2021)

NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Justice

As people of faith, we believe that it is every citizen's right and responsibility to participate in the political process as an expression of their inherent dignity. Our nation was founded on the principle of self-governance, but the people of D.C. do not have control over their own laws or their own budget. Residents of the District must no longer be denied this sacred right and responsibility—it is time for Congress to act. Our status quo maintains that these Americans are not worthy of fully participating in our democracy. This historic vote brings us closer to achieving the ideals articulated in our founding documents. We urge a quick passage of H.R. 51 in the House of Representatives to grant Washington D.C. the sovereignty, rights, and dignity of statehood. (April 17, 2021)

Environmental and Interfaith Community Organizations Joint Letter

Our organizations share the common beliefs that the nation is made stronger when everyone can participate equitably in our political system, and that the protection of our environment is inextricably tied to the protection of our democracy. But for far too long, those who call Washington D.C. home have been denied a vote in Congress, and the ability to govern locally without the threat of targeted interference...Our nation is facing the unprecedented crisis of climate change, and the residents of DC deserve full federal representation in order to urge Congress to act. In addition to providing a vote in the legislative process, statehood would allow DC to participate fully in the budgetary and oversight authorities of Congress that govern the execution of our bedrock environmental laws, such as the Clean Air Act and Clean Water Act. Finally, lifetime positions on our federal courts have a substantial influence on the future of our nation's environmental protections, and DC residents lack any voice in the Senate confirmation process. H.R. 51 is an important and necessary step toward righting a historic wrong, fully enfranchising more than seven hundred

thousand people and realizing our nation's values of equal representation. By establishing Washington D.C. as a state, while preserving a constitutionally required Federal District, this legislation returns power to the people, where it belongs. (March 22, 2021)

National Active and Retired Federal Employees

There are 141,955 active federal employees working in the District of Columbia, many of whom live there, and 43,819 District of Columbia residents who are federal annuitants. These men and women have served our nation with distinction, yet are not afforded the same rights and privileges to self-government as the citizens they have served. It is past time they are. (March 19, 2021)

District of Columbia Affairs Community of the District of Columbia Bar

As the United States continues to bring democratic values and ideals to nations historically governed by tyrants, the Community urges Congress to correct a lingering injustice in its own shadow, namely, the denial of equality and full democracy to the more than 712,000 residents who live in the Nation's Capital. (March 22, 2021)

D.C. Developmental Disabilities Council

Achieving D.C. statehood would be directly in line with DDC's mission. It is particularly important that individuals with I/DD and their families have the opportunity to have their voices heard. Without statehood, residents of D.C., including those with I/DD and their families, do not have the full representation in government that is granted to those in the rest of the fifty states. (March 22, 2021)

Greater Washington Area Chapter, Women Lawyers Division of the National Bar Association (GWAC)

The officers and members of our organization believe that 231 years is long enough and we implore you, as our elected representative to the 117th Congress, to deliver justice for our fellow American citizens living in Washington, DC, by voting in favor of H.R. 51. (March 19, 2021)

The George Washington University President Dr. Thomas LeBlanc

The last year has shown that lack of fair representation in the federal government has disadvantaged the 700,000 District residents—which include many of our faculty, staff and students—in critical matters of funding to address racial and health inequities in our nation's capital. In addition to hardships District residents experience, the issue of lack of federal representation also negatively impacts faculty members and research at D.C. universities, and as a result, research and innovation that has the potential to benefit society. (March 22, 2021)

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

Statehood for the District impacts the entire National Capital Region, home to more than 6 million residents, with hundreds of thousands of federal government employees and contractors serving the country. Residents currently living in the District, more than 11 percent of our region's population, a majority of them being Black and other persons of color, bear all responsibilities required of national citizenship, while being denied the rights and privileges afforded all other citizens of other states. Given the inter-connectivity of the population living and working in the District of Columbia, suburban Maryland, and Northern Virginia, the designation of statehood for the District will positively impact residents throughout the metropolitan Washington region. (April 14, 2021)

AFSCME

This important legislation means finally that the commonwealth shall be admitted to the Union on an equal footing with the other states. It also goes to the heart of the timely question of whether we as a nation are a true democratic republic that affords all of its citizens the full voting rights of the U.S. Constitution and whether the more than 717,000 residents of the District of Columbia, which is more populous than several states, should have the same rights and privileges of all other Americans living in the 50 states. Additionally, 43% of the District's residents are Black and when

admitted, D.C. will have the greatest percentage of Black Americans of any state in the union. Statehood is a clear and decisive step in the right direction toward racial equity. (April 19, 2021)

Service Employees International Union

The push for statehood is important to ensure that workers and residents of the District of Columbia, who are marching and leading to end anti-Black and systemic racism, are never without a voice in their democracy. With a majority Black and brown population the fight for D.C. Statehood cannot be separated from the fight for racial justice. And as our nation continues to strive for a more perfect union by becoming a true multi-racial democracy, it is imperative that the residents of the District of Columbia be fully represented in the Congress by their admission as a state. (March 22, 2021)

American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO

AFGE represents tens of thousands of D.C. and federal government employees who live in the District of Columbia. They, and indeed every resident of Washington, D.C., deserve to have full and equal representation in Congress. One in five residents of the District of Columbia – more than 140,000 in total – work for the federal government and yet do not have equal representation in the government for which they work. This must be corrected. We strongly endorse H.R. 51 to give the more than 700,000 residents of D.C. the full and equal rights and representation that is afforded to the citizens of every other state in the nation. (April 14, 2021)

International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers

More than 712,000 people call Washington, D.C. home, representing a higher population than two states (Wyoming and Vermont). These are hard-working Americans who serve the public each day as federal employees, city workers, and in private sector industries such as health care, retail, food, hospitality, and non-profit. Many of these D.C. residents come from families who have lived in the District for generations, including families who migrated from the South to escape slavery and Jim Crow. These D.C. residents are federal taxpayers who pay more in total tax to the federal government than 21 other states. In fact, D.C. taxpayers are number one in the nation when it comes to per capita federal taxes paid. Despite this incredible contribution to the federal treasury and the rich history that defines the District's unique culture, residents still do not have a vote in Congress because D.C. is not a State...D.C. Statehood is long overdue. Please stand up for democracy for all of our nation's citizens, including District residents, by voting in support of H.R. 51. (April 19, 2021)

State Board of Education of the District of Columbia

Statehood would allow the D.C. government the same authorities as any other state government to provide laws for its residents developed by the representatives of those residents. The violent insurrection on January 6, 2021, demonstrated the failure of the federal government to appropriately protect the health and safety of our students, parents, and families. This is the Nation's Capital, but it is also our home. (March 19, 2021)

ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTING D.C. STATEHOOD

ACLU
ACLU-DC
ACLU-West Virginia
AFGE
African American Ministers in Action
AFL-CIO
AFSCME
All Souls Church Unitarian
Alliance for Justice
Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.
American Association for Justice
American Association of University Women
American Ethical Union
American Family Voices
American Federation of Teachers
American Humanist Association
American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO
Anacostia Coordinating Council
Apartment & Office Building Association of Metropolitan Washington
Autistic Women & Nonbinary Network
Baltimore-Washington Conference of The United Methodist Church
Bend the Arc: Jewish Action
Black Box Brass
Blue Future
Bold ReThink
Brady
Brave New Films
Brennan Center for Justice
Build Back Better USA
California League of Conservation Voters
Campaign Legal Center
Center for American Progress
Center for Biological Diversity
Center for Common Ground
Center for Disability Rights
Center for Environmental Health
Center for Law & Social Policy
Center for LGBTQ Economic Advancement & Research (CLEAR)
Center for Popular Democracy
Children's Defense Fund
Church World Service
Clean Water Action
Clearinghouse on Women's Issues
Coalition of Labor Union Women

Coalition to Stop Gun Violence
Common Cause
Common Defense
Communications Workers of America
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Providences
DC Appleseed
DC Chamber of Commerce
DC Democratic State Committee
DC Environmental Network
DC for Democracy
D.C. Latino Caucus
DC League of Women Voters
D.C. Marijuana Justice
D.C. Statehood – Yes We Can!
DC Statehood Mobilization Action Committee
DC Vote
DC Working Families
Decriminalize Nature DC
Demand Justice
Demand Progress
Democracy 21
Democracy for All 2021
Democracy for America
Demos
Disciples Center for Public Witness (Disciples of Christ)
District of Columbia Building Industry Association
Drug Policy Alliance
Earthjustice
End Citizens United/Let America Vote Action Fund
Fair Fight Action
Federal City Council
Feminist Majority Foundation
Fix Democracy First
Food & Water Watch
Forward Justice Maryland
Franciscan Action Network
Friends Committee on National Legislation
Friends of the Earth U.S.
George Washington University
Georgetown University
Gertrude Stein Democratic Club
GLSEN
Greater Washington Area Chapter, Women Lawyers Division, National Bar Association
Greenpeace USA
Human Rights Campaign
Indivisible
Jews United for Justice

Lambda Legal
The Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
League of Conservation Voters
League of Women Voters of the District of Columbia
League of Women Voters of the United States
March For Our Lives DC
Matthew Shepard Foundation
Modern Military Association of America
MoveOn
NAACP
NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc.
NARAL Pro-Choice America
National Abortion Federation
National Active and Retired Federal Employees Assoc.
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities
National Center or Lesbian Rights
National Community Reinvestment Coalition
National Congress of Black Women
National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA (NCC)
National Council of Jewish Women
National Education Association
National Employment Law Project
National Federation of Democratic Women
National Immigration Law Center
National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund
National Partnership for Women and Families
National Treasury Employees Union
National Women's Law Center
Natural Resources Defense Council
Neighbors United for DC Statehood
Netroots Nation
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
New Progressive Alliance
Newtown Action Alliance
NextGen America
NOPE, Neighbors Defending Democracy
NORML
Northern Virginia Ethical Society
People for the American Way
Physicians for Reproductive Health
Planned Parenthood Federation of America
Planned Parenthood of Metropolitan Washington
Pride at Work
Progressive Democrats of America
Public Citizen

Public Justice Center
SEIU
Sierra Club
Small Planet Institute
Social Security Works
Southern Poverty Law Center
Stand Up America
Stand Up! for Democracy in DC (Free DC)
Students Against Voter Suppression
Students for D.C. Statehood
Students for Sensible Drug Policy
The D.C. Statehood Coalition
The Democratic Coalition
The Rachel Carson Council
Union of Concerned Scientists
Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice
United Church of Christ, Justice and Local Church Ministries
UNITE HERE
United Food and Commercial Workers
Veterans United for DC Statehood
Voices for Progress
Vote.org
Washington Ethical Society
Women's Bar Association of the District of Columbia
51 for 51

**SELECT REPUBLICAN QUOTES SUPPORTING FULL VOTING REPRESENTATION IN CONGRESS &
LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

- **President Dwight D. Eisenhower** in 1954 State of the Union Address to Congress: *“In the District of Columbia the time is long overdue for granting national suffrage to its citizens and also applying the principle of local self-government to the Nation’s Capital. I urge the Congress to move promptly in this direction.”* (January 7, 1954)
- **President Richard Nixon** in a Special Message to the Congress on the District of Columbia: *“Full citizenship through local self-government must be given to the people of this city... The District’s citizens should not be expected to pay taxes for a government which they have no part in choosing – or bear the full burdens of citizenship without the full rights of citizenship...It should offend the democratic senses of this nation that the 850,000 citizens of its Capital, comprising a population larger than eleven of its states, have no voice in the Congress.”* (April 28, 1969)
- **Then-Representative Mike Pence** on the House Floor: *“The fact that more than half a million Americans living in the District of Columbia are denied a single voting representative in Congress is clearly a historic wrong. The single overarching principle of the American founding was that laws should be based upon the consent of the governed...Given their commitment to representative democracy, it is inconceivable to me that our Founders would have been willing to accept the denial of representation to so great a throng of Americans in perpetuity.”* (April 19, 2007)