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## **URGENT ACTION ALERT**

**DATE:** June 18, 2020  
**TO:** Concerned Parties  
**FROM:** Hilary O. Shelton, Director, Washington Bureau

### **NAACP URGES THE U.S. HOUSE TO PASS THE “WASHINGTON, DC ADMISSIONS ACT” GRANTING FULL STATEHOOD RIGHTS TO THE PEOPLE OF DC HISTORIC LEGISLATION, H.R. 51 IS EXPECTED ON THE FLOOR OF THE U.S. HOUSE BY 6/26/2020**

#### **THE ISSUE:**

Despite the fact that the citizens of Washington, D.C. pay federal taxes, serve on juries and defend our Nation in times of war like most other Americans, the residents of the District of Columbia are barred from having voting representation on the floor of the U.S. House and the U.S. Senate. This classic example of “taxation without representation” is contrary to everything that this nation is founded on. This means that over 700,000 people, almost half of whom are African American (with Caucasians making up about 45% of the population), are paying taxes to and dying for a government in which they have no say.

Washington, D.C. currently has a larger population than two states, and the population is bigger than all of the other states except Oklahoma at the time they were admitted to the union. The District’s budget is currently about \$15.5 billion, and it has balanced its budget 24 times in the last 24 years. The city already performs duties that most state do: it operates its own schools, it manages state Medicaid programs, and it receives federal block grants. Like states, D.C. issues drivers licenses, license plates, and birth and death certificates. It regulates its banks and insurance companies, operates a state-based Affordable Care Act marketplace, and enforces environmental regulations. For the purposes of thousands of federal laws, Washington, D.C. acts as a state.

Not only do D.C. citizens not have a voting representative in either the U.S. House or Senate, but to add insult to injury, lawmakers are always interfering with D.C. laws and referendums which are democratically supported by the majority of D.C. voters. Congress has been known to treat D.C. like its own personal “petri dish” dictating what the city can and cannot do and how it may spend its own money.

To begin to correct this gross injustice, Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton (DC) has introduced H.R. 51, the *Washington, D.C. Admission Act* in the U.S. House of Representatives and the in the U.S. Senate, Senator Tom Carper (DE) has introduced identical legislation, S. 631. These bills will make the District of Columbia the 51<sup>st</sup> state in the Union. On February 11, 2020, the House Committee on Oversight and Reform passed H.R. 51 out of committee and to the full House of Representatives with a positive recommendation. **The full House of Representatives is expected to consider the bill on Friday, 6/26/2020.**

The NAACP strongly supports full representation for all the residents of the District of Columbia by making the city a state. The democratically elected government of the District of Columbia should decide what is best on local issues, and we need to make it clear that the residents of the District of Columbia should not be used as test subjects for questionable and sometimes objectionable programs.

### **THE ACTION WE NEED YOU TO TAKE:**

Contact your Representative and **URGE HIM OR HER TO SUPPORT MAKING THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA THE 51<sup>ST</sup> STATE, AND TO SUPPORT H.R. 51 WHEN IT COMES BEFORE THEM ON THE FLOOR OF THE FULL HOUSE.** To contact your Representative, you may:

✓ **Make a Phone Call:**

Call your Senators and your Representative in Washington by dialing the Capitol Switchboard and asking to be transferred to his or her office. The switchboard phone number is **(202) 224-3121** (see message section, below).

✓ **Write a Letter**

To write a letter to your Representative, send it to:

The Honorable (name of Representative)  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

**A SAMPLE**

✓ **Send a Fax**

If you would like to send a fax, call your Representative's office (through the Capitol switchboard) and ask for his or her fax number (you can use either the attached sample letter or the message box, below).

✓ **Send an E-Mail**

To send an email to your Representative, go to [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov), and on the home page click "Representatives". This will allow you to click your Representative either by state or by name. Click on your Representative and you will be directed to his / her web page, which will have instructions on how to send an e-mail. The homepage of [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) also has a tool to help you identify who your current Representative is.

### **THE MESSAGE**

- **Despite the fact that those living in our nation's capital pay federal taxes, serve on juries and defend our Nation in times of war like most other Americans, the residents of the District of Columbia are barred from having voting representation on the floor of the U.S. House and Senate.**
- **This classic example of "taxation without representation" is contrary to everything that this nation is founded on.**
- **This means that more than 700,000 people, almost half of whom are African American, are paying taxes to and dying for a government in which they have no say.**
- **The NAACP supports full statehood rights for the people of the District of Columbia.**

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION TO THIS IMPORTANT MATTER!!!**

If you have any questions, call Hilary Shelton at the Washington Bureau at (202) 463-2940.

**MEMBERSHIP IS POWER! JOIN THE NAACP TODAY.**

To become an NAACP member or to sign up for e-mail legislative and press updates, visit [www.naACP.org](http://www.naACP.org)

# Sample Letter

(date)

The Honorable \_\_\_\_\_  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

**RE: STRONG SUPPORT FOR D.C. STATEHOOD, SUPPORT FOR H.**

Dear Representative \_\_\_\_\_;

As your constituent, I am outraged that the residents of Washington, D.C., our nation's capital do not have voting representation in Congress, despite the fact that they pay federal income taxes, serve in the military and on federal juries. This is wrong, and contrary to everything our nation's forefathers fought and died for over the last 243 years. I therefore urge you, in the strongest terms possible, to support granting statehood to the District of Columbia.

H.R. 51, legislation to make D.C. the 51<sup>st</sup> state, was approved of on February 11, 2020 by the House Committee on Oversight and Reform and is scheduled to come before you on the floor of the full House on Friday, 6/26/2020. Please do all you can to support this sensible legislation and ensure its speedy enactment into law.

The residents of the District of Columbia – our nation's capitol and to many the seat of democracy – are the only Americans who pay full federal income taxes yet are not allowed voting representation in either the U.S. House or the U.S. Senate. This is contrary to the basic tenets of the democracy upon which this nation was founded, and is, quite simply, morally wrong. As a result of their status, the more than 700,000 people living in DC, almost half of whom are African American, pay federal taxes yet do not have a vote on how that money is spent.

By supporting legislation to provide statehood to the District of Columbia, and all of the rights contained in statehood to her residents, you will be letting those residents of D. C. -- as well as your constituents back home -- know that you support and believe in democracy for all Americans. I hope that you agree with me that this egregious error needs to be rectified, and that you will support statehood for the men, women and children in D.C. Please contact me as soon as possible to let me know what you are doing to expedite passage of this legislation and what I can do to help.

Sincerely,

(sign and print your name and  
remember to include your address)

***Remember to  
contact your  
Representative  
TODAY***