



Hawai'i

LATE

Committees: Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs
Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, March 23, 2021, 1:10 p.m.
Place: Via videoconference
Re: Testimony of the ACLU of Hawai'i in Support of S.C.R. 62/S.R. 44, Urging Members of the United States Congress to Enact Federal Legislation Granting Statehood to the People of Washington, D.C.

Dear Chair Nishihara, Vice Chair English, and members of the Committee,

The American Civil Liberties Union of Hawai'i ("ACLU of Hawai'i") writes **in support of S.C.R. 62/S.R. 44**, which urges Congress to enact federal legislation granting statehood to Washington, D.C.

Statehood for Washington, D.C. is one of the most pressing civil rights issues of our time. The lack of statehood for D.C. and its 712,000 people was borne out of the moral stain of slavery and persists through desperate political games to suppress Black and Brown political power and progress. Denying statehood to D.C. denies voting rights to its residents and is an egregious example of ongoing voter suppression happening in our country today. D.C. residents—the majority of whom are Black and Brown—live in the shadow of the U.S. Capitol yet do not have equal access to it. This is wrong and unjust.

We saw the consequences of D.C.'s lack of statehood when white supremacists descended on the Capitol and the streets of D.C. on January 6, 2021. D.C.'s mayor could not call upon the guard without seeking approval from the very person—the President—who incited them, since the D.C. National Guard is the only National Guard unit that reports to the President of the United States.

For the above reasons, the ACLU of Hawai'i urges the Committee to support S.C.R. 62/S.R. 44. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. It is time to correct this injustice.

Sincerely,

Mandy Fernandes
Policy Director
ACLU of Hawai'i

The mission of the ACLU of Hawai'i is to protect the fundamental freedoms enshrined in the U.S. and State Constitutions. The ACLU of Hawai'i fulfills this through legislative, litigation, and public education programs statewide. The ACLU of Hawai'i is a non-partisan and private non-profit organization that provides its services at no cost to the public and does not accept government funds. The ACLU of Hawai'i has been serving Hawai'i for over 50 years.

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