URGING THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO GRANT FULL VOTING RIGHTS FOR RESIDENTS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

WHEREAS, the United States Constitution provided for the establishment of a federal district, known as Washington, District of Columbia, and the residents of the federal district were allowed to vote for members of the United States House of Representatives from the time of incorporation in 1791 until 1801; and

WHEREAS, the passage of the Organic Act of 1801 placed the District of Columbia under the exclusive authority of the United States Congress and abolished residents' right to vote for members of Congress and the President and Vice President of the United States; and

WHEREAS, residents of the District of Columbia were granted the right to vote for the President and Vice President through passage of the Twenty-third Amendment to the United States Constitution in 1961, which Hawaii was the first state to ratify; and

WHEREAS, Congress has allowed the District of Columbia to send a nonvoting delegate to the United States House of Representatives since 1971; and

WHEREAS, Congress passed a constitutional amendment in 1978 to grant full voting rights to District of Columbia residents and, although it was ratified by Hawaii and fifteen other states, the proposed amendment was ultimately unsuccessful, thus keeping the right to vote for congressional representation out of reach for District of Columbia residents; and

WHEREAS, the District of Columbia has 601,723 residents, which according to the 2010 census is comparable to the populations of Wyoming (563,626), Vermont (625,741), North Dakota (672,591), and Alaska (710,231); and
WHEREAS, District of Columbia residents share all the responsibilities of citizenship, including paying federal taxes, serving on federal juries, and defending the United States as members of the United States Armed Services in every war since the War for Independence, yet they are denied full representation in Congress; and

WHEREAS, the District of Columbia's economy is larger than the economies of more than fifteen states; and

WHEREAS, the lack of federal representation severely limits the ability of residents of the District of Columbia to influence legislation on matters directly affecting them, including health, gun control, budgeting, taxes, and governance; and

WHEREAS, the United States is a signatory to international treaties calling for countries to grant full voting rights to its adult citizens, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Organization of American States' American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination; and

WHEREAS, in 2003, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the Organization of American States found the United States to be in violation of international human rights law for its disenfranchisement of District of Columbia residents; and

WHEREAS, Benjamin Cayetano, as Governor of the State of Hawaii, recognized the fundamental right to representation of District of Columbia residents and proclaimed August 2002 "District of Columbia Voting Rights Month"; and

WHEREAS, the White House has affixed the District of Columbia's "Taxation Without Representation" license plates on the presidential limousine and other vehicles, stating that President Obama "has seen first-hand how patently unfair it is for working families in D.C. to work hard, raise children and pay taxes, without having a vote in Congress. Attaching these plates to the presidential vehicles demonstrates the President's commitment to the principle of full representation for the people of the District of Columbia and his willingness to fight
for voting rights, home rule, and budget autonomy for the
district"; and

WHEREAS, in 2013, several measures have been introduced in
the United States Congress that provide for greater
representation and autonomy for the residents of the District of
Columbia; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-seventh
Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2013,
that members of the 113th United States Congress are urged to
enact federal legislation or propose a constitutional amendment
granting full voting rights to residents of the District of
Columbia; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
Resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States,
the Majority Leader of the United States Senate, the Speaker of
the United States House of Representatives, the District of
Columbia's congressional delegate, and members of Hawaii's
congressional delegation.

OFFERED BY:  

[Signature]

[Name]