

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 8

P5
HJ 7/19 – HRU

01r2972

By: **Delegates Acevero, B. Barnes, Bridges, Carr, D.M. Davis, Ivey, Korman, Moon, Smith, Solomon, Stewart, and Wells**

Introduced and read first time: February 6, 2020

Assigned to: Rules and Executive Nominations

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

A House Joint Resolution concerning

United States of America – District of Columbia – Statehood

FOR the purpose of urging the members of the United States Congress to enact federal legislation or propose a constitutional amendment granting legislative autonomy and statehood to the District of Columbia; providing that copies of this Resolution be sent to certain persons; and generally relating to the granting of statehood for the District of Columbia.

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

WHEREAS, As of 2017, the U.S. Census Bureau data estimates that the District of Columbia's population at approximately 705,000 residents is comparable to the populations of Wyoming (577,000), Vermont (624,000), North Dakota (673,000), and Alaska (731,300); and

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



HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 8

WHEREAS, The residents of the District of Columbia themselves have endorsed statehood for the District of Columbia and passed a District-wide referendum on budget autonomy; and

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

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

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

WHEREAS, Although the District of Columbia has passed 24 consecutive balanced budgets, it still faces the possibility of being shut down yearly because of Congressional deliberations over the federal budget; and

WHEREAS, District of Columbia Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton introduced in the 116th Congress H.R. 51, the Washington, D.C. Admission Act, that provides that the State of Washington, D.C. would have all the rights of citizenship as taxpaying American citizens, including two Senators and at least one House member; and

WHEREAS, The United Nations Human Rights Committee has called on the United States Congress to address the District of Columbia's lack of political equality, and the Organization of American States has declared the disenfranchisement of the District of Columbia residents a violation of its charter agreement, to which the United States is a signatory; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the members of the United States Congress are urged to enact federal legislation or propose a constitutional amendment granting legislative autonomy and statehood to the District of Columbia; and be it further

RESOLVED, That certified copies of this Joint Resolution be sent by the Secretary of State to: the Honorable Donald J. Trump, President of the United States of America, 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, D.C. 20500; the Honorable Michael R. Pence, Vice President of the United States, President of the United States Senate, Suite S-212, United States Capitol Building, Washington, D.C. 20510; the Honorable Charles Grassley, President Pro Tempore of the United States Senate, 135 Hart Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510; the Honorable Mitch McConnell, United States Senate Majority Leader, 317 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510; the Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, 1236 Longworth House

Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515; and the Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton, Delegate to the United States House of Representatives for the District of Columbia, 2136 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of Legislative Services to the Maryland Congressional Delegation: Senators Benjamin L. Cardin and Christopher Van Hollen, Jr., Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510; and Representatives Andrew P. Harris, C. A. Dutch Ruppersberger III, John P. Sarbanes, Anthony G. Brown, Steny Hamilton Hoyer, David J. Trone, the Representative from the 7th Congressional District, and Jamie Raskin, House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of Legislative Services to the Honorable Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr., Governor of Maryland; the Honorable William C. Ferguson, IV, President of the Senate of Maryland; and the Honorable Adrienne A. Jones, Speaker of the House of Delegates; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State is directed to send copies of this Joint Resolution to the presiding officers of both Houses of the legislature of each of the several states, with the request that it be circulated among leaders in the legislative branch of the state governments.