HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION  4

A RESOLUTION urging Congress to enact legislation or propose a constitutional amendment to grant statehood to the District of Columbia.


COMMITTEE: State-Federal Relations and Veterans Affairs

ANALYSIS

This house joint resolution urges 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.
HJR 4 - AS INTRODUCED

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty

A RESOLUTION urging Congress to enact legislation or propose a constitutional amendment to grant statehood to the District of Columbia.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

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 693,972 residents is comparable to the populations of Wyoming (563,626), Vermont (625,741), and Alaska (710,231); 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

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 a balanced budget in a timely manner in each of the last 20 years, 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 2 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 Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

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

That certified copies of this house joint resolution be sent by the house clerk to the President of the United States of America, President of the United States Senate, United States Senate Majority Leader, Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the Delegate to the United States House of Representatives for the District of Columbia, and the members of the New Hampshire Congressional delegation.