

MAR 13 2013

SENATE RESOLUTION

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

1 WHEREAS, the United States Constitution provided for the
2 establishment of a federal district, known as Washington,
3 District of Columbia, and the residents of the federal district
4 were allowed to vote for members of the United States House of
5 Representatives from the time of incorporation in 1791 until
6 1801; and
7

8 WHEREAS, the passage of the Organic Act of 1801 placed the
9 District of Columbia under the exclusive authority of the United
10 States Congress and abolished residents' right to vote for
11 members of Congress and the President and Vice President of the
12 United States; and
13

14 WHEREAS, residents of the District of Columbia were granted
15 the right to vote for the President and Vice President through
16 passage of the Twenty-third Amendment to the United States
17 Constitution in 1961, which Hawaii was the first state to
18 ratify; and
19

20 WHEREAS, Congress has allowed the District of Columbia to
21 send a nonvoting delegate to the United States House of
22 Representatives since 1971; and
23

24 WHEREAS, Congress passed a constitutional amendment in 1978
25 to grant full voting rights to District of Columbia residents
26 and, although it was ratified by Hawaii and fifteen other
27 states, the proposed amendment was ultimately unsuccessful, thus
28 keeping the right to vote for congressional representation out
29 of reach for District of Columbia residents; and
30

31 WHEREAS, the District of Columbia has 601,723 residents,
32 which according to the 2010 census is comparable to the
33 populations of Wyoming (563,626), Vermont (625,741), North
34 Dakota (672,591), and Alaska (710,231); and
35



1 WHEREAS, District of Columbia residents share all the
2 responsibilities of citizenship, including paying federal taxes,
3 serving on federal juries, and defending the United States as
4 members of the United States Armed Services in every war since
5 the War for Independence, yet they are denied full
6 representation in Congress; and
7

8 WHEREAS, the District of Columbia's economy is larger than
9 the economies of more than fifteen states; and
10

11 WHEREAS, the lack of federal representation severely limits
12 the ability of residents of the District of Columbia to
13 influence legislation on matters directly affecting them,
14 including health, gun control, budgeting, taxes, and governance;
15 and
16

17 WHEREAS, the United States is a signatory to international
18 treaties calling for countries to grant full voting rights to
19 its adult citizens, including the International Covenant on
20 Civil and Political Rights, the Organization of American States'
21 American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man, and the
22 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination;
23 and
24

25 WHEREAS, in 2003, the Inter-American Commission on Human
26 Rights of the Organization of American States found the United
27 States to be in violation of international human rights law for
28 its disenfranchisement of District of Columbia residents; and
29

30 WHEREAS, Benjamin Cayetano, as Governor of the State of
31 Hawaii, recognized the fundamental right to representation of
32 District of Columbia residents and proclaimed August 2002
33 "District of Columbia Voting Rights Month"; and
34

35 WHEREAS, the White House has affixed the District of
36 Columbia's "Taxation Without Representation" license plates on
37 the presidential limousine and other vehicles, stating that
38 President Obama "has seen first-hand how patently unfair it is
39 for working families in D.C. to work hard, raise children and
40 pay taxes, without having a vote in Congress. Attaching these
41 plates to the presidential vehicles demonstrates the President's
42 commitment to the principle of full representation for the
43 people of the District of Columbia and his willingness to fight



1 for voting rights, home rule, and budget autonomy for the
2 district"; and

3
4 WHEREAS, in 2013, several measures have been introduced in
5 the United States Congress that provide for greater
6 representation and autonomy for the residents of the District of
7 Columbia; now, therefore,

8
9 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-seventh
10 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2013,
11 that members of the 113th United States Congress are urged to
12 enact federal legislation or propose a constitutional amendment
13 granting full voting rights to residents of the District of
14 Columbia; and

15
16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
17 Resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States,
18 the Majority Leader of the United States Senate, the Speaker of
19 the United States House of Representatives, the District of
20 Columbia's congressional delegate, and members of Hawaii's
21 congressional delegation.

22
23
24

OFFERED BY:





