



March 22, 2021

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the two million members of the Service Employees International Union (“SEIU”), I write in strong support of H.R. 51, the “Washington, D.C. Admission Act,” which is the focus of the hearing today before the House Committee on Oversight and Reform. The right to vote and to equal representation is a pillar of democracy, and it is time to ensure these rights extend fully to the 700,000 residents of the District of Columbia through admission into the Union as a state. The recent insurrection of the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021 is further evidence of how the lack of representation threatens the safety of residents and the well-being of our country. Because the District of Columbia is not a state, it lacks the power to maintain public order like every other sovereign state, and local officials are dependent on the federal government to authorize protection in national emergencies like the insurrection. The urgency to ensure everyone has a voice and representation in the future of their government, including the residents of the District of Columbia, must be met with swift and bold action.

SEIU members believe in and fight for our vision for a just society: where all workers are valued and all people respected, no matter where we are from or the color of our skin; where all families and communities can thrive; and where we leave a more just and equitable world for generations to come. As a union, we understand the importance of working people having a seat at the table where decisions are made and using our collective voice to advance change in our communities. Workers in D.C. who serve the community by keeping our nation’s institutions safe and clean deserve a vote in Congress.

From the strength of our generational collective solidarity, working people from all backgrounds have been able to win higher wages, better benefits, and safer workplaces that they deserve. But we must demand the same radical and bold policy approach from our elected leaders to truly change our institutions designed to silence voices that would otherwise challenge the status quo. The push for statehood is important to ensure that workers and residents of the District of Columbia, who are marching and leading to end anti-Black and systemic racism, are never without a voice in their democracy. With a majority Black and brown population the fight for D.C. Statehood cannot be separated from the fight for racial justice. And as our nation continues to strive for a more perfect union by becoming a true multi-racial democracy, it is imperative that the residents of the District of Columbia be fully represented in the Congress by their admission as a state.

We appreciate your attention to this vital issue of ensuring everyone in our democracy has a voice. We hope that Congress will soon act to admit the District of Columbia as a state in the Union and that this effort will have your support. If you have additional questions, please contact Isaiah Wilson Isaiah.wilson@seiu.org or (202)-730-7250.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Wasserman
Government Relations Director

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