



NAACP

WASHINGTON BUREAU

June 17, 2020

The Honorable
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

RE: NAACP STRONG SUPPORT FOR H.R. 51, THE *WASHINGTON, D.C. ADMISSION ACT*

Dear Representative,

On behalf of the NAACP, our nation's oldest, largest and most widely-recognized grassroots-based civil rights organization, I would strongly urge you to support H.R. 51, the *Washington, D.C. Admission Act* when it comes before you on the House floor for consideration next week. H.R. 51 is a crucial bill working to ensure fairness and equality in Congress for the U.S. Federal tax -paying residents of the District of Columbia who do not currently have voting representation in matters directly impacting their lives.

Despite the fact that D.C. residents pay federal taxes, serve on juries and defend our nation in times of war, the residents of the District of Columbia are barred from having voting representation on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives or the U.S. Senate. This classic example of "taxation without representation" is contrary to everything upon which our country was founded. Due to the District's unique status, the federal government receives and spends \$4 billion from the people of D.C. without their having a say in how that money is spent.

Furthermore, Congress consistently interferes with D.C. laws; dictating what the city can and cannot do and how it may spend its own money (not just the money it receives from the Federal government). Congress currently has the ability to enact policies in direct opposition to the democratically expressed will of D.C. residents without giving these Americans a voting voice in the process.

The issue of D.C. statehood disproportionately impacts African Americans. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, almost half of the over 700,000 people living in D.C. identify themselves as being black American, despite the fact that we make up just over 13 percent of the overall American population. These hard-working Americans are paying money to and dying for a government in which they have no voice.

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

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Due to the undemocratic nature of the current situation for the residents of D.C, as well as the fact that it disproportionately impacts Americans of color as well as everyone else living in our nation's capital, the NAACP strongly supports full representation for all the residents of the District of Columbia. I would like to encourage you to do everything you can to support this crucial legislation and see it become law. Because fair representation for all people is a priority for the NAACP, we are committed to working to educate all Americans on the need for H.R. 51 and on its benefits to our nation. Should you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me at my office at (202) 463-2940.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Hilary O. Shelton', with a stylized, flowing script.

Hilary O. Shelton
Director, NAACP Washington Bureau &
Senior Vice President for Policy and Advocacy