

Dear Members of the North Dakota Legislative Assembly:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of SCR 4009, a resolution **urging Congress to support the admission of Washington, DC into the Union as a state of the United States.**

My name is Reva Schwartz and I am a proud resident of Washington, DC. I have lived in DC since 1997 and currently live in the Petworth neighborhood with my husband, daughter, and our two cats. I was a proud federal employee for 20 years but have recently opened my own business working in the field of AI research. My husband is still a federal employee.

Approximately the same number of people live in DC as live in North Dakota. Yet unlike the Peace Garden State we have no voting representatives in Congress. This means we have no say in federal laws, policies, and programs, and no one to champion our interests in debates over national priorities.

As a DC resident, any time that something happens in national politics I have had to rely on my family members who live in Ohio and New York to voice their support or opposition to whatever the matter happens to be. Since my family lives in those places they have one representative and two Senators they can call or write to. But, as a resident of this wonderful city I do not have those rights. While I can reach out to Delegate Holmes-Norton, she is not afforded the privilege of representing the more than 700,000 DC residents in our Congress. We are American citizens, we pay taxes, we build up our families, we serve our community and this country. **Having no voice in our national representation is in direct opposition with the democratic ideals this nation was founded on.**

It goes further than our lack of representation. **Our local government is also at constant risk of interference from federal lawmakers.** Without statehood, DC's power over issues like our local schools, health care, senior services, and other key programs are at constant risk of interference from members of Congress who we did not elect and have no connection to our beloved city. This is an immediate danger to our communities and one which can only be permanently addressed through statehood.

DC residents also **pay the [highest federal taxes per capita](#) compared to any other state** — yet we have no say in how the federal budget is spent.

I am urging you to **vote “yes” on SCR 4009 and support full democratic representation for the 700,000 people who call DC home.**

Statehood for DC is the only solution to this problem. Strengthening democracy for DC will strengthen democracy everywhere, including for North Dakota communities. Correcting DC's lack of representation is an issue of justice, and as a DC resident I encourage you to be in solidarity with communities here and vote “yes” on SCR 4009.

Thank you for consideration of this important matter and the opportunity to testify on this incredibly important bill.

Sincerely,
Reva Schwartz
Washington, DC