

North Dakota SCR 4009 - Andria Thomas

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 Andria Thomas and I am a proud resident of Washington, DC. I am urging you to vote "yes" on SCR 4009 and support full democratic representation for the 700,000 people who call DC home.

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.

I live in Washington DC for the same reason many of us choose to live someplace. DC is close to my family and my husband's family. It is convenient to work. We have great neighbors, good schools, nearby parks, and wonderful community and culture. But what we don't have are the same American rights enjoyed by Americans living outside of DC. We don't have a vote in Congress. In fact, we just don't lack that vote in the House or those two votes in the Senate that residents of all states are guaranteed; our uniquely unequal status means we don't have full control over our local laws, or our criminal justice system, or even our ability to earn revenue to pay for the parks and schools and roads that our families need. We live in a fundamentally unequal system. All 700,000 of us.

It's very hard to explain this system to my daughters. My 12 year-old, Maggie, learns about American history in school, and the American flag, and the three branches of government in school. But questions like "Who are our Senators?" or "Which star on the flag is for DC?" always prompt the same difficult followup question: Why? How do you tell two little girls born as Americans in a hospital not far from the White House that their rights are not the rights of other Americans? That the US Capitol building they pass on the way to a field trip does not include any representatives who vote for their rights? That they are two of the 100,000 children living in DC who will have to one day choose: to live where they were born and where their families live, or to move away and to an unfamiliar state where they can be equal after all. That's not a choice that any other Americans have to face.

I support DC statehood because my daughters shouldn't have to choose between where they were born and their rights as Americans. They deserve full participation in our government and full representation in our US Congress. Just as my husband and I deserve full representation for the federal taxes we pay annually; in fact, DC residents pay the highest per-capita income taxes in the United States.

Taxation without representation wasn't right during the American Revolution, and now, more than 250 years later, it's not right today for DC. Please support DC statehood for all the DC

North Dakota SCR 4009 - Andria Thomas

families and children who deserve the American rights that everybody in North Dakota already enjoys. Thank you for your consideration.

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

Sincerely,

Andria Thomas

Washington DC