

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 Allegra Hatem and I am a proud resident of Washington, DC. I was born and raised in DC, attended DC schools through my senior year of high school, and chose to return to the city immediately after college in order to be close to my family. I currently work in the city as a tour guide. I am fortunate to have parents, cousins, and friends who all call DC home. As anybody would, I care deeply about my home and my loved ones who share it with me.

It is for those reasons that **I am urging you to vote “yes” on SCR 4009** and support full democratic representation for the 700,000 Americans who live in DC.

Approximately the same number of people live in DC as live in North Dakota, but lack the same voting representation 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.

Additionally, **our local government is 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 is at constant risk of interference from members of Congress whom we did not elect and who are not accountable to us.

As someone who has never set foot in North Dakota, it would be absurd for me to have any power to interfere in North Dakota's local laws and budget. Your constituents would be furious (and rightfully so) if they were stripped of their right to self-determination or their voice in the federal government. As a DC resident, I urge you to support extending the same rights to us that are enjoyed by your constituents—the same rights our country's founding fathers enshrined as the cornerstone of our democracy and for which thousands of American patriots gave their lives 250 years ago.

DC residents have served in every American war, and there are currently [more than 8,000 DC residents serving in the US military](#)—yet we have no say in whether our country goes to war.

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

Statehood for DC is the only solution to this problem. It brings me joy to know that there are North Dakotans who care enough about upholding the values of democracy to bring this resolution before your legislature. I encourage you to do the same by voting “yes” on SCR 4009.

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

Sincerely,

Allegra Hatem
Washington, DC