

Dear Members of the North Dakota Legislative Assembly:

My name is Athena Viscusi. I am a social worker, homeowner, and taxpayer living in Washington DC. My two children and three grandchildren were born and grew up here.

I am writing **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.

Maybe Washington DC and North Dakota do not have much in common on the surface. But when you look closer, you can see the similarities: we are both have under a million residents, who are all Americans, who serve in the military, who attend public schools, who love our sports teams, and who pay taxes. The only difference is that the North Dakotans are represented in the United States congress by two Senators and a Member of Congress and residents of DC have **taxation without representation**.

No representation means we have no say in federal laws, policies, and programs, and no one to champion our interests in debates over national priorities. Ironically, your Congressional delegation has more say than we do over how DC tax revenue is spent, and over what laws can be enacted by our city government.

Without statehood, DC's power over issues like our public safety, local schools, health care, senior services, and other key programs is at constant risk of interference from members of Congress who we did not elect. This is an immediate danger to our communities and one which can only be permanently addressed through statehood.

DC residents have served in every 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. 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.

Perhaps some of you have visited Washington DC and seen what a beautiful, vibrant place it is. We host our national government and tourists from all over the country and the world, but at heart we are a collection of neighborhoods, like any city.

Thank you so much for considering this important matter and for giving me the opportunity to testify on this incredibly important bill.

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

Sincerely,

**Ayjena Viscusi**

Washington DC