



Effects of DC's Disenfranchisement From a Business Perspective

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The Good News: DC is Growing and Vibrant

As the political center of the country, Washington, DC, continues to attract businesses, new residents and tourists from all over the world. Over the past five years, DC has balanced its budget, maintained a cash surplus, improved its credit rating, and met the goals set out by Congress to demonstrate its ability to self govern.

The Bad News: DC's Disenfranchisement Hurts District Businesses and Residents

But, as long as Congress has the power to impose restrictions on our district and our collective voice is limited in Congress, the District will be undermined in its efforts to attract and retain businesses.

DC's Voice in Development of Laws and Regulations is Limited

When federal legislation and regulations that directly affect businesses are drafted, debated, and adopted, the DC business community has a very limited voice in the process.

Ability to Secure Resources is Reduced

Service providers and businesses alike, as compared to their counterparts in the states, are at a disadvantage when we try to compete for federal funds for new projects and/or seek greater economic assistance for business districts and depressed areas.

Ability to "Protect" DC's Interest is Diminished

It is widely understood that senators and representatives in Congress protect the interest of people in their states or districts. Although our Delegate works hard to keep federal jobs in the District and secure federal funding for various projects that benefit DC, our collective power to achieve these results is significantly diminished without representation in the Senate.

Congressional Oversight Creates Uncertainty

Every local law and every local budgetary decision made by the DC government must be approved by Congress. No other jurisdiction in the country must submit its local budget to an outside authority elected by people from other states. No other jurisdiction must wait to invest funds in new projects while members of Congress decide what is appropriate for the District. This relationship negatively impacts the District because it creates uncertainty for businesses and residents alike.

Bottom Line

The key to DC's economic success has been and will continue to be the viability of businesses in the District. The District of Columbia needs to continue to be competitive with other states in the region and nationally to attract and retain business and maintain its economic growth. Voting representation for DC would greatly help the District be more competitive. First, voting representation for the District will mean that District residents and businesses will have the power to ensure local decisions are not overturned and DC's local budget is approved by Congress on time. Second, voting representation will mean District residents and businesses will have a greater say in the passage of Federal laws under which they live and influence over regulations or laws that directly affect DC. Third, voting representation will mean that DC residents and businesses can better protect their interests and compete for federal resources.