



July 24, 2007

Dear Senator:

We urge you to support S. 1257, the DC House Voting Rights Act, when it comes to the Senate floor for a vote. This legislation is a bipartisan effort to end the injustice that has deprived 580,000 Americans living in the District of Columbia of the fundamental right of voting representation in Congress.

The bill was introduced by Senator Joe Lieberman (I-CT), along with Senators Orrin Hatch (R-UT) and Robert Bennett (R-UT). The inclusion of an additional House seat for Utah ensures that there will be no partisan gain in the House as a result of this legislation.

A similar bill passed the House by a vote of 241-177 in April. Earlier this summer the Senate Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee passed the bill with a bipartisan vote after hearings were held in that committee and the Judiciary Committee.

The bill has the strong support of a large coalition of organizations from the voting rights and civil rights community. Prominent Republicans, including former HUD Secretary Jack Kemp, former U.S. Representative J.C. Watts, and former Maryland Senate candidate Michael Steele also support the legislation.

Constitutional scholars including Kenneth Starr and Viet Dinh have written and testified in support of the constitutionality of this approach to providing DC citizens with voting representation in Congress.

The Senate now faces a critical test of its commitment to the democratic rights of all Americans. The Senate has been debating issues of war, terrorism and spreading democracy around the world. Now we must look to our own backyard and ensure that the District of Columbia has voting representation in Congress.

Sincerely,

Bob Edgar
President and CEO
Common Cause