U.S. Public Opinion on DC Voting Rights

Survey Conducted for DC Vote by KRC Research
January 2005
What’s New

• New Information:
  – Current level of support for DC budget autonomy
  – Compelling messages in support of DC Voting Rights

• More Robust Measures
  – More comprehensive measure of awareness (previous study only measured awareness among college graduate voters 21+)
  – Voting rights question wording test: half sample asked one version (trend question), the other asked a shorter version
  – More demographics: political party, individuals who have visited DC, who know someone who lives in or near DC, military families, religious families, registered voters, election year attentives, and “Influentials.”
Research Design

• Nationally representative random (RDD) sample of 1,007 U.S. adults, 18 years and older.

• Telephone interviews conducted January 14-16, 2005.

• Margin of error at 95% confidence level is ±3 percentage points.

Definition: “Influentials are individuals who have done three or more of the following activities: attended a public meeting on town or school affairs, written or called any politician, served on a committee for a local organization, served as an officer for an organization, wrote a letter to the editor or called a live radio or TV show to express an opinion, been an active member of any group that tries to influence public policy or government.
Sample Characteristics

- **Gender:** 52% women, 48% men
- **Region:** 19% Northeast, 23% Midwest, 36% South, 23% West
- **Age:** 31% 18-34, 38% 35-54, 30% 55 and older
- **Education:** 72% not college graduates, 25% college graduates
- **Ethnic identity:** 68% Caucasian, 12% Black, 12% Latino, 2% Asian, 7% other or unreported
- **Political party:** 29% Republican, 34% Democrat, 23% Independent, 14% other or unreported
- **Registered voters:** 86%
- **Closely followed Presidential election:** 79%
- **Someone in family serves in military:** 51%
- **Attend religious services regularly:** 45%
Key Findings
Support for DC Political Rights

- Support for equal voting rights for DC citizens in the Senate and the House has increased ten percentage points in just over five years: (72% to 82%)
- Support crosses all groups – including political party lines
“Nearly six hundred thousand U.S. citizens live in Washington, DC. They pay full federal taxes and fight in every war. But, unlike citizens who live in the 50 states, they do not have voting representation in Congress—neither in the House of Representatives nor in the Senate. **In your opinion, should DC citizens have equal voting rights in the House and the Senate, or not?**”
Support for DC Voting Rights is Up

October-99: 72%
January-05: 82%

+10%

Percent Support Equal Voting Rights

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www.dcvote.org
Support Crosses Demographic Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percent Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ALL ADULTS</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-34</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-54</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55+</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percent Support Equal Voting Rights

DC Vote
www.dcvote.org

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January 2005
Support Crosses Demographic Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Group</th>
<th>Support Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ALL ADULTS</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro area</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-metro area</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have family member in military</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regularly attend religious services</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visited DC in past five years</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have friends or family living near DC</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have friends or family living in DC</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered voters</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closely followed presidential primary</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College graduate voters</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Influentials”</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percent Support Equal Voting Rights

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Support Crosses Party Lines

Democrats: 87% of total, 87% of men, 87% of women
Independents: 82% of total, 79% of men, 85% of women
Republicans: 77% of total, 68% of men, 86% of women

Percent Support Equal Voting Rights

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Most Supportive

Percent Support Equal Voting Rights

89% 89%

Democrats who closely followed the Presidential Primary
Those aware of DC’s license plate slogan

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Little Gain for Vote in House Only

**IF NO OR DON’T KNOW:** “Would you support congressional voting rights for DC citizens in the House of Representatives only?”

- DC citizens should have equal voting rights in the House and Senate: 82%
- DC citizens should not have equal voting rights: 13%
- Not sure: 5%

Support House Vote: 28%, Oppose House Vote: 52%, Don’t know: 20%
Support for Budget Autonomy

• **Seven in ten Americans** support giving the DC elected government the right to control the local DC budget

• Support for budget autonomy crosses all groups—

  including political party lines
“Currently DC residents pay for most of the costs of their local government. Unlike other cities and states, DC’s local government budget must be approved by the full Congress. Currently, Congress has final say on how the local DC budget is spent. There is a bill that would give the elected DC government the right to control its own local budget. Would you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose this bill?”

- **Strongly support**: 32%
- **Somewhat support**: 39%
- **Somewhat oppose**: 11%
- **Strongly oppose**: 8%
- **Don’t know**: 10%

Percent Support Budget Autonomy

Strong supporters outnumber strong opponents by four to one.

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Support Crosses
Demographic Groups

- ALL ADULTS: 71%
- Women: 70%
- Men: 73%
- 18-34: 76%
- 35-54: 73%
- 55+: 67%
- Northeast: 71%
- Midwest: 75%
- South: 67%
- West: 80%

Percent Support Budget Autonomy

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Support Crosses
Demographic Groups

ALL ADULTS: 71%
Metro area: 72%
Non-metro area: 71%
Have family member in military: 72%
Regularly attend religious services: 71%
Visited DC in past five years: 74%
Have friends or family living near DC: 70%
Have friends or family living in DC: 70%
Aware of DC’s license plate slogan: 78%
Registered voters: 74%
Closely followed presidential primary: 74%
College graduate voters: 76%
“Influentials”: 70%

Percent Support Budget Autonomy

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DC Vote
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Support Crosses Party Lines

Percent Support Local Budgetary Control

Democrat:
- Total: 70%
- Men: 74%
- Women: 68%

Independent:
- Total: 76%
- Men: 75%
- Women: 76%

Republican:
- Total: 74%
- Men: 71%
- Women: 76%

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Low Awareness of the Problem

• Just over 80 percent of American adults are not aware that DC does not have equal Constitutional rights, including voting rights in Congress.

• Those who have visited the District are more informed than others.

• A majority are aware that DC citizens pay federal and state income taxes.
Americans Remain Uninformed about DC’s Political Status

“As far as you know, please tell me if each of the following statements is true or false... **Citizens who live in Washington, DC have the same constitutional rights as other U.S. citizens, including equal voting rights in Congress?**”

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**Percent Not Aware DC Does Not Have Equal Rights**

- DC citizens have the same rights: 78%
- DC citizens do not have the same rights: 18%
- Not sure: 4%

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DCVote
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Majority of All Groups are Uninformed

Percent Not Aware DC Does Not Have Equal Rights

ALL ADULTS: 82%
Women: 87%
Men: 78%
18-34: 90%
35-54: 83%
55+: 73%
Northeast: 82%
Midwest: 85%
South: 83%
West: 79%
Democrat: 84%
Independent: 81%
Republican: 80%

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Majority of All Groups are Uninformed

- ALL ADULTS: 82%
- Metro area: 81%
- Non-metro area: 86%
- Have family member in military: 85%
- Regularly attend religious services: 84%
- Visited DC in past five years: 65%
- Have friends or family living near DC: 75%
- Have friends or family living in DC: 76%
- Registered voters: 80%
- Closely followed presidential primary: 79%
- College graduate voters: 64%
- “Influentials”: 68%

Percent Not Aware DC Does Not Have Equal Rights
Percent Saying DC Does Not Have Equal Voting Rights in Congress

- College graduate voters: 36%
- Visited DC: 35%
- “Influentials”: 32%
- 55 years and older: 27%
- Republican men: 27%
- Have friends or family near DC: 25%
- Have friends or family in DC proper: 24%

In 1999, 45% answered correctly.

Most Informed Groups

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“Taxation without Representation” license plate

“As far as you know, please tell me if each of the following statements is true or false… The citizens of Washington, DC changed their license plate motto to ‘Taxation without Representation’ to protest not having Congressional voting rights.”

- Have friends who live in the District of Columbia: 34%
- Visited Washington, DC: 33%
- ALL ADULTS: 26%
Most Americans Assume DC Pays Federal and State Income taxes

"As far as you know, please tell me if each of the following statements is true or false…"

- DC citizens pay no federal income taxes: 76%
- DC citizens pay no state or local income taxes: 63%

Percent Saying “False”
Messages for Communicating About DC Political Rights

• There are compelling reasons for supporting equal Congressional voting rights for DC.
Democracy is an American birthright
Children should know that everyone counts in American democracy
Everyone who pays taxes should have voting representatives in Congress
DC citizens have fought and died in every U.S. war
The U.S. should promote democracy at home
When one citizen’s vote is taken away, we all suffer
DC should be a positive example, not a capital with taxation without representation

Percent Saying “Good” or “Excellent” reason to Support Equal DC Voting Rights
Democracy is an American birthright

Children should know that everyone counts in the American democracy

Percent Saying “Excellent” reason to Support Equal DC Voting Rights

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January 2005

www.dcvote.org
Now I’m going to ask you a few questions about U.S. citizens who live in Washington, DC.

As far as you know, please tell me if each of the following statements is true or false:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>True %</th>
<th>False %</th>
<th>Not Sure %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Citizens who live in Washington, DC have the same constitutional rights as other U.S. citizens, including equal voting rights in Congress.</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Washington, DC citizens pay no federal income taxes.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Washington, DC citizens pay no state or local income taxes.</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4a. **SPLIT SAMPLE A:** Nearly six hundred thousand U.S. citizens live in Washington, DC. Under the U.S. Constitution, Congress has exclusive legislative authority over the District government. Since 1961, DC citizens have had the right to vote in presidential elections. And since 1974 they have elected a limited home rule government paid for mostly by local taxes. DC citizens also pay full federal taxes and fight in every war. But, unlike citizens who live in the 50 states, they do not have voting representation in Congress—neither in the House of Representatives nor in the Senate. In your opinion, should DC citizens have equal voting rights in the House and the Senate, or not?

4b. **SPLIT SAMPLE B:** Nearly six hundred thousand U.S. citizens live in Washington, DC. They pay full federal taxes and fight in every war. But, unlike citizens who live in the 50 states, they do not have voting representation in Congress—neither in the House of Representatives nor in the Senate. In your opinion, should DC citizens have equal voting rights in the House and the Senate, or not?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Combined (1,007)</th>
<th>Version A (515)</th>
<th>Version B (492)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, DC residents should have equal voting rights</td>
<td>82 %</td>
<td>82 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, DC residents should NOT have equal voting rights</td>
<td>13 %</td>
<td>13 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>5 %</td>
<td>5 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**IF NO OR DON’T KNOW:** Would you support Congressional voting rights for DC citizens in the House of Representatives only?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support voting rights in the House only</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support voting rights in the House only</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not support voting rights in the House</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I’m going to read you some statements. For each one, please tell me if that statement is an **excellent**, a **good**, a **fair**, or a **poor** reason for why American citizens living in Washington, DC should have equal voting rights in the Senate and the House of Representatives. First… (ROTATE LIST)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Excellent or Good %</th>
<th>Excellent %</th>
<th>Good %</th>
<th>Fair %</th>
<th>Poor %</th>
<th>Don’t know %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5. Democracy is an American birthright—all American citizens should have the right to vote in their national legislature.</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Washington, DC citizens should be able to teach their children that everyone counts in American democracy.</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Everyone who pays federal taxes should have voting representatives in Congress, where the decisions are made on taxes and spending.</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Washington, DC citizens have fought and died proudly for the United States in every war, and they are fighting in Iraq today.</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Excellent or Good %</td>
<td>Excellent %</td>
<td>Good %</td>
<td>Fair %</td>
<td>Poor %</td>
<td>Don't know %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. The U.S. is promoting democracy in places like Iraq—it should promote democracy here at home in its national capital.</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Even though I don't live in Washington DC, when one citizen's vote is taken away, American democracy suffers and it affects us all.</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Washington, DC should be a positive example of American democracy in the world, not the only national capital in the world that has taxation without representation.</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
12. Currently DC residents pay for most of the costs of their local government. Unlike other cities and states, DC’s local government budget must be approved by the full Congress. Currently, Congress has final say on how the local DC budget is spent. There is a bill that would give the elected DC government the right to control its own local budget. Would you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose this bill?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUPPORT</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly support</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat support</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPPOSE</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat oppose</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly oppose</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As far as you know, please tell me if each of the following statements is true or false:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>True %</th>
<th>False %</th>
<th>Don’t know %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13. The citizens of Washington, DC changed their license plate motto to “Taxation without Representation” to protest not having Congressional voting rights</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. You have visited Washington, DC in the past five years</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. You have friends or family who live near Washington, DC</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. You have friends or family who live in Washington, DC itself</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. You closely followed the Presidential election during 2004</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. You or someone in your family serves in the U.S. military</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. You attend religious services regularly</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. You are registered to vote</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
About KRC Research

• KRC Research is a full service, non-partisan, worldwide opinion research firm with offices in the District of Columbia, New York, Boston, and London. For over 25 years KRC has conducted a full range of custom qualitative and quantitative research projects for Fortune 500 companies, trade associations, governments, non-profit organizations, advertising and public relations agencies.

• KRC Research has worked in most industry and economic sectors including aerospace, agriculture, aviation, banking, biotechnology, development and facility siting, education, energy, entertainment, environment, financial services, government, health care, insurance, litigation support, marketing, regulatory, retail, and sports.
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