As a state legislator, you now face a decision on the future of 750,000 Americans...

A Special Report to State Legislators on the Constitutional Amendment to grant the residents of the District of Columbia full voting representation in the U.S. Congress.
Joint Resolution

Proposing an amendment to the Constitution to provide for representation of the District of Columbia in the Congress.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled (two-thirds of each House concurring therein), That the following article is proposed as an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which shall be valid to all intents and purposes as part of the Constitution when ratified by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States within seven years from the date of its submission by the Congress:

"Article—

"Section 1. For purposes of representation in the Congress, election of the President and Vice President, and article V of this Constitution, the District constituting the seat of government of the United States shall be treated as though it were a State.

"Sec. 2. The exercise of the rights and powers conferred under this article shall be by the people of the District constituting the seat of government, and as shall be provided by the Congress.

"Sec. 3. The twenty-third article of amendment to the Constitution of the United States is hereby repealed.

"Sec. 4. This article shall be inoperative, unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States within seven years from the date of its submission."


Passed the Senate August 22, 1978.
You face a decision...

on ratifying the Constitutional amendment granting the men and women of the District of Columbia full voting representation in the U.S. Congress.

In the words of Senator Robert Dole:

The District of Columbia is not just a plot of land full of big white buildings and people who have come here temporarily to work for the Federal Government. Rather, it is home to almost three-quarters of a million people...

This report presents the facts about the amendment and those people and separates the District of Columbia as their home from the myth of the District of Columbia as simply the seat of our national government.

What the Amendment Will Do

The Amendment Will:

- Give American citizens who make their home in the District of Columbia full voting representation in the U.S. Congress — two Senators and the number of Representatives proportionate to the District's population (at least one).
- Give the men and women of the District of Columbia representation in the Electoral College proportionate to the District's population.
- Give the citizens in the District of Columbia a voice in ratifying Constitutional amendments, just like Americans in the 50 states.
- Repeal the 23rd Amendment, which gave residents of the District of Columbia representation in the Electoral College no greater than that of the smallest state.

The Amendment Will Not:

- Make the District of Columbia a state.
- Change the unique status of the District of Columbia envisioned by the framers of the Constitution.
- Provide "home rule" — local self government — for the District of Columbia or in any way alter the control which the U.S. Congress exercises over the District.

Who Supports the Amendment?

Supreme Court Justice William H. Rehnquist
(as Assistant Attorney General in 1970)

"The need for an amendment of that character at this late date in our history is too self-evident for further elaboration; continued denial of voting representation from the District of Columbia can no longer be justified."

The Republican Party
(National Party Platform, 1976)

"We... support giving the District of Columbia voting representation in the United States Senate and House of Representatives."

The Democratic Party
(National Party Platform, 1976)

"We support... full voting representation in the Congress [for the District of Columbia]."
Who Supports (cont.)

President Jimmy Carter
"There should be no doubt that District citizens deserve full voting representation..."

Senator Robert Dole
(R-Kansas)
(on the Republican Platform)
"The time has come for action, and if this platform means anything it means the Republican Party supports this resolution.
"Republicans rallied to that platform in great numbers. Our most distinguished leaders enthusiastically adopted it as an excellent expression of Republican principles and ideals. By all accounts, it was a platform that conservatives could be proud of.
"The Republican Party supported D.C. voting representation because it was just, and in justice we could do nothing else."

Senator Barry Goldwater
(R-Arizona)
(in a "Dear Colleague" letter)
"We urge your support for this fundamental principle of justice for the citizens of the nation's capital,..."

Senator Edward M. Kennedy
(D-Massachusetts)
"In matters of fundamental justice and human rights involving the citizens of our nation, there is no left or right, liberal or conservative...
"The issue is one of simple justice... In a nation that was
founded on the principle of representative government and that has prided itself for two centuries on the strength and vitality of its democracy, it is a travesty of history that the District of Columbia has no voice in Congress."

Senator Richard B. Stone
(D-Florida)

"Fundamental fairness demands that the District have full representation in Congress . . . I believe that a denial of full representation in the national legislature to residents of the District of Columbia is a denial of their share of the birthright that belongs to all U.S. citizens . . . "

Bill Brock, Chairman,
Republican National Committee

"I join the Republican Congressmen and Senators who sponsored and supported [this] constitutional amendment in urging Republicans all over the Nation to assist in implementing this plank of our 1976 party platform."

How Will the Amendment Affect Your State?

The amendment will have no detrimental effect on the people of your state, their voice in their national government, or upon any state's rights. Specifically:

In the U.S. Congress

The amendment will not deprive the people of any state of their equal suffrage in the U.S. Congress. The number of U.S. Senators will be increased from 100 to 102, with the people of every state still being represented by two Senators. The people of the District will elect the number of Representatives to the U.S. House proportionate to District population (at least one Representative). U.S. House Districts will be reapportioned after the 1980 and 1990 censuses; between the censuses the House has the power to add additional seats and has traditionally done so when new Representatives are added. The House also has the statutory power to add additional seats permanently.

In Election of President and Vice President

No state's representation in the Electoral College will be decreased. Presently, the people of the District are entitled to three electors. The amendment simply guarantees that the people of the District will have the number of electors due them by population. If the number of the District's electors increases, the Electoral College will increase in size.

In Ratifying Amendments to the U.S. Constitution

The amendment will not change the method of ratifying Constitutional amendments nor weaken states' rights in ratifying amendments. The proportion needed to ratify an amendment will remain at three-fourths. Presently 38 states must ratify; when the people of the District of Columbia are granted a voice, the number will be 39.

The record clearly shows that members of Congress from metropolitan areas vote just as often for programs to help rural and farm people as members from rural areas. I wouldn't be for this amendment if I thought it would hurt the people in my home state of North Dakota.

Charles Conrad, Affiliate Coordinator
Rural America, Inc.
Why Ratify—
a message from the men and women of the District of Columbia

"In World War II, I served in the China-Burma-India and Pacific The-aters for five years and survived," John Hechinger says. "Despite my military service, I was—and still am—denied a say in war or peace for America." John, a fourth-generation Washingtonian, is president of a 68-year-old lumber and hardware firm. He was the first chairman of the District's Council.

We men and women who live in the District of Columbia are no different from the Americans who live in your state. We share your constituents' concerns and face the same problems they face. We are equally worried about inflation, unemployment, wasteful government spending, high taxes, crime. We are equally concerned about the growth of the federal government and its impact on our individual lives. Federal laws, regulations, policies affect us just as they do your constituents.

Like the Americans in your state—and unlike those in U.S. territories such as Puerto Rico and Guam—we bear all the responsibilities of citizenship. We pay our full share of federal, as well as state/local, taxes. Our fathers, sons, and husbands have been subject to military draft and have served in every war since the Revolution.

With a population of 750,000 (1970 census), the District of Columbia has more residents than ten states. But, unlike Americans across the country, we bear the responsibilities of citizenship without a voice in our national legislature. While the Americans of your state are guaranteed their fair voice and vote in the U.S. Congress, an equal vote in ratifying Constitutional amendments, and equal representation in the Electoral College which chooses our Presi-
dent, we in the District are not.

Lacking our just voice in our national government, we lack a voice in the matters which concern us and all other Americans. For example:

- **Inflation.** An NBC News poll of voters on November 7, 1978 showed that inflation is the problem which most concerns Americans. Voters also said that the best way to end inflation was to cut federal spending and that they most blamed the U.S. Congress for inflation. We suffer just as much from rampant inflation as the people of your state. But we have no one in the U.S. Congress to vote against inflationary government spending.

- **The Panama Canal Treaty.** During 1978, Senate debate over ratification of the Panama Canal Treaty was long and intense. Citizens all across the country felt strongly about this issue and told their Senators how they felt. Citizens in the District felt just as strongly—for and against—the treaty. But we had no Senators to communicate with.

- **Taxes.** We in the District are just as affected by the federal taxes levied by Congress as the men and women of your state. In 1977 the U.S. Congress passed the social security tax increase—the largest peacetime tax hike ever. Men and women all across the country let their Senators and Representatives know how much the tax bite hurt. It hurt us in the District just as much. But we had no one to complain to, no one to hold accountable for his or her vote.

As explained on the previous pages, this amendment in no way infringes upon the rights of your constituents. It simply extends to us who live in the District of Columbia the full voice in our
The Case for the Amendment

Population

One of the strongest arguments in favor of this amendment is the simple fact that the District of Columbia is not just a museum collection of Federal monuments and government buildings. It is also the home of hundreds of thousands of men, women, and children—750,000 as of the 1970 census. This population is greater than that of the 1970 census population of ten states:

- District of Columbia: 757,000
- New Hampshire: 738,000
- Idaho: 713,000
- Montana: 694,000
- South Dakota: 666,000
- North Dakota: 618,000
- Delaware: 548,000
- Nevada: 489,000
- Vermont: 445,000
- Wyoming: 332,000
- Alaska: 303,000

The Americans living in your state and in each of these states have their full voting representation in Congress and full participation in their federal government. Each of your constituents can vote for two Senators and one Representative. But the Americans living in the District of Columbia have no such representation.

Taxes

Since the days of the Revolutionary War, a fundamental principle of our nation has been the rejection of taxation without representation.

The American citizens who live in Washington, D.C. must pay large amounts in taxes each year to the federal government. But they are denied representation in the U.S. Congress which levies those taxes. In 1977 the people of the District paid out more than $1.4 billion in taxes to the federal government. That tax burden was heavier than that of 11 states:

There is simply no justification for denying three-quarters of a million people, paying more than $1 billion in Federal Taxes per year, a vote in deciding how that money is allocated.

Representative
Stewart B. McKinney

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>($ Billion)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District of Columbia</td>
<td>1.470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maine</td>
<td>1.400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Hampshire</td>
<td>1.330</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alaska</td>
<td>1.225</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nevada</td>
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<tr>
<td>Idaho</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wyoming</td>
<td>0.735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vermont</td>
<td>0.630</td>
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On a per capita basis, people in the District paid more federal taxes in 1977 than residents of 49 states. The average taxpayer in the District of Columbia paid $2,116 in federal taxes in 1977; that is $491 above the national average of $1,625. The average taxpayer in only one state—Alaska—paid more in federal taxes that year.
The Case (cont.)

War Casualties

In 1971 a District of Columbia Gold Star mother wrote of her pain and frustration to Senator Thomas Eagleton. She said:

I have lost one son. I may well lose another. Yet I have no voice in voting on how far this war should go, or how long it should go on,... I am hopeless, and in that sense I am voiceless.

Men from the District of Columbia have served America in every war since the Revolution. In the Vietnam War, 237 District residents lost their lives. That is a loss greater than that of ten states:

- District of Columbia: 237
- New Hampshire: 218
- Idaho: 210
- Rhode Island: 200
- North Dakota: 194
- South Dakota: 187
- Nevada: 144
- Delaware: 120
- Wyoming: 117
- Vermont: 100
- Alaska: 55

Like the men in those states, and in all other states, the men of the District were subject to the draft. Like those men, the men of the District fought and died for their country. But unlike the men from your state and other states, the men of the District, and their families, had no voice in the U.S. Congress which sent them to fight for their country.

Federal Control

Americans are becoming more and more concerned about the increasing impact of the federal government on their lives. State government officials, too, are increasingly concerned about federal control of states' actions. And yet, this federal control over the states is miniscule compared to Congress' control over the lives of the men and women in the District of Columbia.

Although the people of the District have their own elected representative body—the Council of the District of Columbia—the U.S. Congress has direct and powerful control over the District's people. The Congress reviews and sets the local budget. The Congress imposes many restrictions on commerce in the District, such as a building height maximum of 160 feet which severely limits commercial tax revenues by limiting density of commercial offices. The Congress must pass on certain plans such as the location of a new convention center.

The framers of the Constitution established this federal capital district because they did not want the nation's capital to be controlled by any single state. This amendment will not alter this status. What the amendment will do is give the people of the District of Columbia the same fair voice in the federal govern-
ment which controls their lives even more than the lives of your constituents.

**World Precedent**

Among 115 nations in the world with elected national legislatures, only two—the United States and Brazil—deny representation in the legislature for citizens of their capitals.

The virtually universal practice in nations with elected legislatures—whether democracies or totalitarian systems—is to accord representation to the residents of their capitals equal to that of their other citizens. Significantly, 14 out of 16 nations with federal systems of government like the United States follow this principle of equality:

I say we cannot talk about human rights to others in the world until we here at home can show we are recognizing basic human rights.

Senator Strom Thurmond

- Nine federal nations (Austria, Canada, West Germany, India, Nigeria, Pakistan, Switzerland, the Soviet Union, and Yugoslavia) have capitals which are not special federal districts whose residents have equal representation.

- Seven federal nations (Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Malaysia, Mexico, Venezuela, and the United States) have national capitals which are federal districts with special status similar to the District of Columbia. Residents of five of these special districts—all but the United States' and Brazil's—have voting representation in their national legislature.

**History and Intent—**

**in creation of the District of Columbia**

It is clear that the founding fathers, who struggled so hard for liberty and equality, never intended to deprive the people living in the District of Columbia of their full rights of citizenship. In the Federalist papers, written in 1787-88 to explain and present the proposed Constitution to the states, James Madison says that the inhabitants of the District would be willing for the area to be ceded because, "... they will have had their voice in the election of the government which is to exercise authority over them;..."

The concept of a federal district separate from any state developed as the response to the "Philadelphia Mutiny" of June 21, 1783 during the Continental Congress being held in Philadelphia. On that occasion, angry Revolutionary Army soldiers demanding back pay marched on Independence Hall where the Congress was meeting. The Congress requested protection from the Pennsylvania militia, but the request was refused; the Congress was forced to flee the city.

Largely as a result of that incident, in 1787 the framers of the Constitution approved Article I, Section 8, Clause 17 of the Constitution, giving Congress the power to create as the seat of government a federal district totally independent from any state.

Until the official transfer of the federal government to the District of Columbia in 1800, area residents were subject to Maryland and Virginia laws and voted in federal elections as residents of their respective states.

This practice ended in December of 1800 when Congress took over exclusive jurisdiction of the District without making provisions for voting representation for the residents of the area.

The framers of the Constitution did not need to concern themselves with representation in Congress for residents of the District because at that time the population was simply too small. According to the census of 1800, the population of the entire District of Columbia was 14,000—far fewer than the 50,000 then required of territories which wanted to enter the Union and thus have national representation.

Congress at that time was concerned that the people of the District not receive representation until the District's population warranted it. During the 1801 debates on District suffrage there was much discussion of providing representation for the District when its population reached the appropriate size.
This Amendment—Not a Radical Change

The Constitutional amendment to grant the men and women of the District of Columbia full voting representation in Congress and their other full rights of citizenship is not a revolutionary alteration to a document unchanged in 191 years. It is simply one more step in the orderly process of amendment envisioned as necessary by the framers of the Constitution and provided for by them.

Although the amendment is new to many state legislators and other Americans across the country, it is not a sudden "brainstorm" or the product of hasty and ill-considered action. The U.S. Congress has considered how to grant District residents their full rights since 1800. Since then Congress has debated this issue 24 times. Both the 94th and 95th Congresses held extensive hearings, did in-depth research, and spent many hours of debate on this amendment. After this exhaustive deliberation, Congress ruled out other means for granting the District representation—such as statehood or retrocession to Maryland—as unconstitutional, unworkable or politically unfeasible and adopted this proposed Constitutional amendment.

This amendment does not depart from the spirit of the Constitution or the other amendments enacted over the years. Rather, it is a logical extension of the principle of widened suffrage embodied in six other Constitutional amendments. Since ratification of the Constitution in 1788, six amendments have extended and broadened the right of suffrage. These amendments are:

- **The 15th Amendment**—Universal Male Suffrage (1870). This amendment guaranteed suffrage to male citizens, regardless of "race, color, or previous condition of servitude."
- **The 17th Amendment**—Popular Election of Senators (1913). This amendment removed the selection of U.S. Senators from the hands of the state legislatures and placed it with the people. As a result, each Senator represents not his or her state or state legislature, but the individual citizens in the state.
- **The 19th Amendment**—Woman Suffrage (1920). This amendment guaranteed suffrage to female, as well as male, citizens.
- **The 23rd Amendment**—Presidential Electors for the District of Columbia (1961). This amendment granted Americans in the District of Columbia the right to vote in Presidential elections, giving the District the number of Electoral College members no greater than that of the smallest state.
- **The 24th Amendment**—Qualifications of Electors; Poll Tax (1964). This amendment made unconstitutional any state's requiring payment of a poll tax or other tax as a qualification for voting.
- **The 26th Amendment**—Right to Vote; Citizens Eighteen Years of Age or Older (1971). This amendment guaranteed suffrage to all citizens 18 years old or older.

"I'm terrified that my income won't cover my medical bills," retiree Edna Crusevire says. Rising costs of housing, medicine, and food worry her. "Medicare helps enormously," she says, "but Congress could cut my benefits." Edna has lived in the District for 45 years.

The Constitution is a living document, an embodiment of America's ideal of equality for all. The six amendments described above have kept the Constitution alive by reflecting in it Americans' growing conviction that all citizens, regardless of race, sex, creed, place of residence, or economic condition, deserve a voice in their national government. The proposed amendment to grant the men and women of the District of Columbia full voting representation is one more step in that process.
Fallacies—

about the Constitution and the Voting Representation Amendment

Fallacy #1
Senate Representation Based on Statehood

The fallacy that the people of the District should not have Senate representation because the Constitution bases such representation on statehood ignores several clear facts:

- Senators do not represent their states; they represent the people of their states. A state is a geographic, legal, and governmental entity. Before 1913, Senators could be said to represent their states since they were chosen by the legislatures, a branch of state government. But since ratification of the 17th amendment establishing their popular election, Senators have represented the people of their states, not the states themselves.

During Senate debate on this amendment, Senator Barry Goldwater (Arizona) said, “It has long ago been established by court decrees, as well as by American political tradition, that the right to vote in federal elections is a right that flows directly from the Constitution to each citizen [emphasis added] of the United States. This right is one belonging to national citizenship and it arises out of the very nature and existence of the nation itself.”

- The U.S. Supreme Court, the ultimate arbiter of Constitutionality, has treated the District of Columbia as a state in four decisions:

  In 1820 the Court ruled that Congress has the authority directly to tax D.C. residents, even though the Constitution says that taxes are to be apportioned “among the several states [emphasis added]…”

  In 1887 the Court affirmed that District residents had the Sixth Amendment right to trial by jury, even though that amendment refers only to “an impartial jury of the state [emphasis added]… wherein the crime shall have been committed.”

  In 1899 the Court ruled that Congress could exercise the power to regulate business across District borders, despite the fact that Article I of the Constitution refers only to “commerce… among the several states [emphasis added].”

  In 1949 the Court upheld a federal law which included the District under a specific jurisdiction in federal courts, along with the states.

- The U.S. Congress has regularly treated the District as a state many times. For example, the District has been treated as a state in virtually every major law authorizing federal grants. In program after program, statute after statute, the following words appear: “For the purposes of this legislation, the term ‘state’ shall include the District of Columbia.”

  The United States has a bi-cameral legislature. On most questions of national defense, taxation, spending, etc., passage by both the House and Senate is required. The Senate alone has the power to ratify treaties and to try impeachments.

Fallacy #2
D.C. Senate Representation a Precedent for Territories and Cities

Some people have asked, “If the people of the District of Columbia can have representation in the Senate, why not the people of Puerto Rico, or New York, or Des Moines, or Spokane?” This fallacy ignores the uniqueness of the District and the basic differences between residents of the District and those of American territories and cities.

The District of Columbia is not a U.S. Commonwealth like Puerto Rico. The people of Puerto Rico do not pay federal income taxes; the people of the District do. The men of Puerto Rico have not been subject to military draft; the men of the District have. The people of Puerto Rico voted for commonwealth status. They chose not to have all of the rights of American citizens in return for not bearing all the responsibilities of American citizens. The people of the District of Columbia can make no such choice; they now bear the responsibilities without the rights.

The people of New York and all U.S. cities, on the other hand, have both the full responsibilities and the full rights of their citizenship. They pay federal taxes and have been subject to the draft. But they also are represented in both houses of Con-
"Risking my own safety to protect others is part of my job," says Captain Bernard Johnson. "But I put my life on the line to protect a Congress in which I don't even have a vote. It's just not fair." Bernard, a 20-year veteran in the District fire department, is a third-generation Washingtonian. He has lived all his life here.

gress. They have a large say in the election of the Senators from their states. As Senator Ted Kennedy (Massachusetts) said during Senate debate on this amendment, "I speak for Boston. I speak for Springfield. I speak for Lowell and Lawrence, and New Bedford and Fall River, Mass. I speak for all of them...I challenge anyone...to say that either Senator Javits or Senator Moynihan does not speak for New York or that any other Senators do not speak for any of the other cities."

Concern has been expressed that the amendment is not specific enough about how District residents would have a voice in ratifying Constitutional amendments or that Congress may have an undue influence over ratification. Some people have asked whether District residents could vote on amendments in a referendum, a process not available to the states under the Constitution. These concerns are readily answered by a close look at the amendment.

Section 1 of the amendment specifically says that "For purposes of...article V of this Constitution [ratifying amendments] the District...shall be treated as though it were a State [emphasis added]." There are two methods of ratification open to states—ratification by the state legislature and by Constitutional convention. The method of ratification is determined by Congress at the time each amendment is submitted to the states. Congress specified, for example, that the repeal of the 18th Amendment be ratified by Constitutional conventions.

Section 2 of the amendment states that "The exercise of the rights and powers conferred under this article shall be by the people [emphasis added] of the District...as shall be provided by the Congress." Thus the Congress has the power to specify the method of ratifying Constitutional amendments—just as it does for the states—but it does not have the power to

Fallacy #3
Constitutional Ratification Clause Too General or Unfair to States
influence the vote on ratification or in any way "rig" the process.

Furthermore, these clauses of the amendment were left somewhat general on purpose. Presently the structure of the elected governing body of the District—the Council of the District of Columbia—is dissimilar from that of most state legislatures. For this reason, the members of Congress, who represent the people of states, may decide it is fairer to have a Constitutional convention consider ratification by the District. If the structure of the Council or the District government changes in the future, this wording ensures that the people of the District will have a voice in ratifying Constitutional amendments. It also ensures that that voice will be no greater or less than that of citizens in the 50 states.

Fallacy #4
Other Solutions to the Problem

Over the years, plans other than the amendment now before you have been drawn up to grant residents of the District of Columbia their full rights. The U.S. House and Senate carefully considered each of these solutions and rejected them because of their inherent Constitutional and practical problems. The three most widely proposed plans are:

*Statehood* The suggestion has been made that if the people of the District of Columbia want representation in the U.S. Congress, then the District should seek statehood. The argument has been heard, "If the District wants all the rights of a state, let it assume all the responsibilities of a state."

This statehood fallacy is based on misconceptions of both the District and our Constitution. First, the District of Columbia does not bear all the responsibilities and carry out all the functions of a state. The District government collects and imposes taxes and provides all services for its residents, just as a state does.

Second, and more importantly, making the District a state would destroy the original concept of the seat of national government as independent from any state which the founding fathers so purposefully set forth.

*Full Retrocession to Maryland* The idea of retrocession (giving back) the District of Columbia to Maryland ignores the fact that retrocession would require the approval of the Maryland legislature, if not the residents of Maryland at large through a referendum. Over the years Maryland elected officials have declared that such a proposal is politically preposterous and would stand virtually no chance of passage.

Most importantly, however, retrocession also would destroy the unique character of the seat of government. As Professor Charles Alan Wright, professor of law at the University of Texas Law School, has said, retrocession "would completely destroy the unique character of the District, a character that was contemplated by the Framers [of the Constitution] . . . ."

*Partial Retrocession to Maryland* Partial retrocession—simply turning District residents into Maryland residents for the purpose of voting in Senate and House elections—raises complicated, perhaps unsolvable, legal and governmental problems. For example, should not District residents then be entitled to send representatives to Maryland’s capital, Annapolis, to participate in drawing new Congressional District boundaries? Should not District residents then have a vote for the Governor of Maryland who has the power to fill vacancies in the Senate delegation? Should not District residents then vote in Maryland’s primary elections that determine the political parties’ candidates for the U.S. Congress?

Enabling District residents to vote in Maryland’s Congressional elections without granting them these further rights would deny them full participation in government. But granting them these rights would seriously infringe upon the political rights of Maryland residents.
Myths about the District of Columbia

"When we moved from North Dakota to the District, we lost our right to representation in Congress. That shouldn't have happened," say Charles and Joyce Conrad. Charles works for Rural America, Inc.; Joyce for the National Farmers Union. They plan to make the District home for the rest of their lives.

Although thousands of Americans visit their nation's capital each year, there are many myths about the District of Columbia which have persisted. Some of these myths are:

The Federal Subsidy Myth

Some Americans believe that because the District receives a special federal payment each year District residents get a "free ride" on the tax dollars paid by the rest of the country. The federal payment is not a "free ride", but a payment by Congress to the District to compensate for the services which the District must provide and the loss in revenue to the District because of the federal presence.

The size of the District's special federal payment often has been exaggerated by lumping with it financial assistance from federal programs which operate in states. Here are the facts:

The District provides innumerable services, such as police and fire protection, building and maintenance of streets and roads, and utilities, to the federal government. Many of these services are of extraordinary nature. The District police force, for example must be prepared to handle traffic control and other problems caused by marches and demonstrations.

In addition, the District loses enormous amounts of tax revenue because of the federal presence. Federal government offices occupy blocks of what would otherwise be taxable commercial property. For example, the new J. Edgar Hoover FBI building replaced an entire five-acre plot of revenue-generating shops, restaurants, and other businesses. The FBI building and grounds are officially assessed at $140 million. If the FBI paid taxes, it would owe the District $2,565,000 a year. The tax value of all the exempt federal property was $134,908,548 for Fiscal Year 1979.

The Tax Myth

Many Americans believe that District residents do not pay federal taxes or do not pay local taxes. District residents pay more federal taxes per capita than residents of 49 of the 50 states. And District residents pay local income, real estate, sales, and other taxes to support their government, just as the people do in the states. In fact, the average per capita state/local tax paid by District residents in 1977 was $1,071—$258 above the national average and higher than that paid in 46 states.
The District loses other revenue because of the special restrictions on taxes and commerce the federal government imposes. The government restricts the income and sales taxes paid by military and foreign diplomatic personnel. The building height limitation of 160 feet imposed by the federal government severely limits the density of taxable commercial space. The Congress has refused to allow the District to issue tax exempt bonds.

It is true that the District also gains economic benefits such as revenues from tourism from the federal presence. The granting of a special federal payment is recognition that those benefits do not compensate for the economic burdens placed on the District by the federal government.

The amount of the federal payment to the District in Fiscal Year 1979 was $235 million, down $41 million from 1978. Any federal money which the District received in addition to that amount—in revenue sharing, federal grants or loans—was received through the same process of application and award which each state must follow.

Beyond these misconceptions, the idea that the Americans living in the District of Columbia are “well paid” for their lack of representation is abhorrent. The notion that money is a proper compensation for depriving citizens of their full rights contradicts every principle of equality and just representation that our forefathers fought so hard to establish.

**The Federal Employee Myth**

The myth that the District of Columbia is a “one-interest town” whose residents are all federal government workers dissolves in the light of the facts. Only about 33% of the District’s work force is employed by the federal government. That is less than the 38% employed in nearby Arlington County, Virginia.

The District’s population is quite diverse, consisting of businessmen, construction workers, bankers, teachers, the elderly, and virtually all the other occupational groups found in the various states. Many District residents were born and raised here and have never worked for the federal government. Other residents have come across the United States to make the District their permanent home. Accordingly, a wide range of interests and values is reflected in the District’s people.

**The Federal Bureaucracy Myth**

The presumption that Senators and Representatives from the District would vote to enlarge the federal bureaucracy because the federal government is here ignores the fact that District residents pay $327 above the national average in federal taxes. Any expansion of the federal government would necessarily mean increased federal income taxes. Representatives of the District are most unlikely to vote to expand the federal bureaucracy and increase their constituents federal taxes.
Myths (cont.)

"Congress decides how the local taxes I pay are spent," Delano Lewis, a C&P Telephone Co. executive says. "They decide whether my boys will have a park down the street to play in. But there's no one on Capitol Hill to vote for my family when they pass the D.C. budget." Del is on the boards of 16 community associations, including the Red Cross, the Board of Trade, and Friendship House.

The Urban Area Myth

The assumption that Senators and Representatives from the District would automatically vote against rural programs or farm programs also is a myth. Many District residents have family or other strong ties to rural and farm areas.

This myth also is proven false by the record of the District's present non-voting delegate to the House of Representatives. During the 95th Congress Delegate Walter Fauntroy co-sponsored the Emergency Farm Act of 1978, proposed to aid farmers in their fight against inflation and low market prices. During the farmers' march on Washington in 1978, Del. Fauntroy's office was flooded with farmers thanking him for his support. Unfortunately, under the present system, Del. Fauntroy could not vote for that bill on the floor of the House; he could only sponsor it.

The "Four Toos" Myth

The idea that the men and women of the District of Columbia should not have Congressional representation because their elected representatives might be "too urban, too liberal, too black, and too Democratic" is not only false but also injects into a Constitutional debate questions unworthy of consideration.

As stated above, the fact that the District is an urban area does not mean that its representatives will have no sympathy for rural problems. Sen. Patrick Leahy, during debate on this amendment, said, "I represent the most rural State in the United States, the State of Vermont. We do not have one single urban area, by Federal standards. Yet I am here arguing to give this [representation] to a virtually exclusively urban area."

The issues concerning the elected Council of the District of Columbia belie the idea that the District's representatives will be too liberal. During the 1978 Council and Mayoral election, candidates' platforms concentrated on such issues as crime prevention, reductions in taxes, and efficient management of government. Like Americans in all other areas of the country, District residents are tired of paying for government waste, tired of paying the high cost of crime, and tired of escalating taxes.

The makeup of the District's Council also refutes the assumptions that District representatives automatically will be black and Democratic. The Council is a racially mixed group of men and women, with Republican and Independent members as well as Democrats.

The District of Columbia Republican Committee supports this amendment. Says Republican Committee Vice-Chairman Mel Burton, "District residents' increasing concern over high taxes and wasteful government spending are the historical concerns of the Republican Party. I think there is a bright future for Republicans in the District, and ratification of this amendment will strengthen our two-party system."

The history of admission of states to the Union shows that the residents of many territories shared the same burden of misconceptions and injustice that the people of the District of Columbia now face. For example:

The admission of Oregon was hindered by Republican fears that it would be a Democratic state. But Oregon now has two Republican Senators.

In that case, the goal was statehood. But statehood is not readily available to the people of the District of Columbia because of the unique character of the District as the nation's capital. In a larger sense, however, the people of the territories and the people of the District of Columbia share the same goal—full and equal participation in our national government.
Beyond the Myths

The debunking of these myths about the District of Columbia and its potential representatives is important. But far more important is the fact that these political and social judgments have no place in the consideration of an amendment to the Constitution. Refusing representation to the people of the District because it is an urban area is no different than denying representation to the people of Idaho because they live in a rural area. Denying the Americans who live in the District their full rights because their representatives might be liberal, or black, or Democratic is the same as denying those rights to the Americans who live in Utah because their two Senators are Republican, conservative, and white.

Both conservatives and liberals in the U.S. House and Senate recognized the justice of this amendment and gave it their support. Both the Republican and Democratic 1976 party platforms support full voting representation. Republican and Democratic Presidents since 1915 have supported full voting representation for the men and women of the District.

It is now up to state legislators to examine this amendment and cast their votes.

All the men and women of the District ask is that each legislator give full consideration to the merits of this issue, and that each legislature give this amendment full and just deliberation. Once all the facts have been considered, the men and women who make the District of Columbia their home are confident that they will be granted their full rights of citizenship.

"If it weren't for the federal tax deduction for mortgage interest, we couldn't afford to own a home," says Peter Hobbs. The recent tax changes passed by Congress didn't help Peter and his wife Maggie; with the Social Security increase, they are worse off than in 1977. Maggie adds, "I am a seventh-generation Washingtonian. Since we bought our first home, I've seen how much the tax decisions made in Congress affect us. It really hurts to be paying all that income tax and have no one to vote for us."
Published by: Ratification Campaign Committee,
The District of Columbia Voting Rights Amendment
2030 M Street, N.W., Room 300
Washington, D.C. 20036
(202) 833-1232

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Typeset by: Barton Graphics
Printed by: Moore and Moore, Incorporated

Special Thanks to: Johnny Barnes
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Without whose help
publication would
not have been possible.
Supporters of the Amendment to Grant District of Columbia Residents Full Voting Representation in Congress Include:

AFL-CIO
American Association of University Women
American Civil Liberties Union
American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees
American Federation of Teachers
American Jewish Committee
Americans for Democratic Action
American Veterans Committee
Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith
Catholic Archdiocese of Washington
Common Cause
Communications Workers of America
Delta Sigma Theta
Democratic National Committee
District of Columbia Bar
District of Columbia Republican Committee
El Congresso
The Episcopal Church
Friends Committee on National Legislation
Greater Washington Central Labor Council
International Union of Operating Engineers
Leadership Conference on Civil Rights
League of Women Voters of the U.S.
Metropolitan Washington Board of Trade
National Alliance of Postal and Federal Employees
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
National Association of Counties
National Association of Cuban-American Women, Inc.
National Capital Union Presbytery
National Conference of Christians and Jews
National Education Association
National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council
National Urban League
National Women's Political Caucus
National Student Association—National Student Lobby
The Newspaper Guild
The Ripon Society
United Auto Workers
United Methodist Church, Board of Church and Society
United Presbyterian Church
United States Jaycees
United Steel Workers of America
Washington Bar Association
Washington Teacher's Union
“The District of Columbia is not just a plot of land full of big white buildings and people who have come here temporarily to work for the Federal Government. Rather, it is home to almost three-quarters of a million people who should be granted congressional representation just as the citizens in all of our States are.”

Senator Robert Dole