Reject Anti-Democratic Effort to Repeal DC’s Local Gun Laws

September 24, 2004

Dear Senator:

We are writing to ask that you vote against S. 1414, an effort to repeal the District of Columbia’s local gun-control laws. This legislation undermines the right to self-determination that is at the heart of American democracy.

In order to protect the children and the law enforcement officers of the District of Columbia, the mayor and city council, with the strong support of DC law enforcement officers, adopted strict gun control laws for the city. While others may disagree with these laws, it is clear that they were enacted by officials duly elected by the citizens of the District and enjoy strong support today among D.C. residents.

During his last State of the Union address, President Bush said, “I believe that God has planted in every human heart the desire to live in freedom.” We whole heartedly agree. Washingtonians have a deeply held desire for freedom – a desire to see that the local laws passed by their local government addressing local issues be respected.

It would be simply anti-democratic for Congress, with no voting representation from the people of the District and targeting only the District, to overturn local laws designed to protect from violence those who live, work, and visit in DC.

The people of the District of Columbia pay federal taxes and have fought defending our freedom in every war. We urge you to support democracy in our nation’s capital and federalism in our country by opposing S. 1414. We also urge you to restore the fundamental right to representative democracy for D.C. residents. The second-class status of Washingtonians is un-American. The time to redress this historic injustice is now.

Sincerely,

DC Vote

ACLU - National Capital Area

Common Cause
Council of Latino Agencies

DC Appleseed Center for Law and Justice, Inc.

Greater Washington Urban League

InterFaith Conference of Metropolitan Washington

Leadership Conference on Civil Rights

League of Women Voters of the United States

Metropolitan Washington Council, AFL – CIO

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)

Non-Profit Roundtable of Greater Washington

So Others Might Eat

Stand Up! for Democracy in DC Coalition

Washington, DC Branch of the NAACP