

## STATEHOOD FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

For the past 219 years, American citizens living in the District of Columbia, including federal employees and annuitants, have not had the right to self-government enjoyed by those living in the 50 states.

District of Columbia residents do not have any voting representation in either the U. S. House of Representatives or the U. S. Senate. Yet, Congress maintains the power to amend or deny funding (paid by local taxes) or even overturn laws passed by the local elected government of Washington, DC.

This is an offense to the basic principles upon which the nation was founded.

Furthermore, this denies hundreds of thousands of active and retired federal employees their basic right to self-governance and democratic representation. According to the Office of Personnel Management, there are 141,514 active federal employees working in the District of Columbia, many of whom live there, and 44,014 District of Columbia residents are federal annuitants. Another 5,493 postal employees work in the District of Columbia, according to the Postal Regulatory Commission.

Statehood would ensure that all District of Columbia residents, including federal employees and annuitants – like all other Americans – are represented by two senators and a representative in Congress.

### **Legislation**

Statehood requires only a simple majority vote in each chamber of Congress and the president's signature.<sup>1</sup> All states are admitted on an equal footing, and it is the only form of self-government that Congress cannot amend or take away.

Toward this end, NARFE supports H.R. 5803, the Washington, D.C. Admission Act, introduced by Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton, D-DC, and its companion legislation in the Senate, S. 631, introduced by Sen. Thomas R. Carper, D-DE, in the 116th Congress. H.R. 5803 was approved by the House Oversight and Reform Committee on February 11, 2020, with NARFE's support.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Const., Art. IV, § 3.