

SJM 6 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Veterans, Emergency Management, Federal and World Affairs

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Meeting Dates: 3/30, 4/4

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Resolves that the Eighty-second Legislative Assembly will urge Congress to pass and the President to sign, legislation granting statehood to Washington D.C.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

As of 2022, the United States Census Bureau estimates 670,000 residents live in the District of Columbia (Washington D.C.), which is comparable to state populations of Wyoming, Vermont, Alaska, and North Dakota. Washington D.C. residents are required to pay federal taxes and serve on federal juries, but residents are not self-governed and do not have full representation in Congress.

The District of Columbia Organic Act of 1801 placed Washington D.C. under the exclusive authority of the U.S. Congress and abolished the right of residents to vote for members of Congress and the President and Vice-President of the United States. Washington D.C. residents were granted the right to vote for President and Vice-President through the passage of the Twenty-Third Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1961. The District of Columbia Delegate Act of 1970 allowed Washington D.C. residents to elect a non-voting delegate to the House, however Washington DC residents have no representation in the Senate. In 2022, District of Columbia House Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton and Delaware Senator Thomas Carper, introduced the Washington D.C. Admissions Act (H.51; S.51) providing the people of Washington D.C. all the rights of citizenship as taxpaying Americans, including representation by two Senators and at least one House of Representative member.

Senate Joint Memorial 6 urges Congress to pass and the President to sign, legislation granting statehood to Washington D.C as the 51st state of the Union.