



Great Public Schools  
for Every Student

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September 17, 2019

U.S. House of Representatives  
Committee on Oversight and Reform  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Representative:

On behalf of our 3 million members and the 50 million students they serve, we would like to submit for the record the following comments in connection with the September 19 hearing, “H.R. 51: Making D.C. the 51st State.”

With more than 700,000 residents, the District of Columbia has a larger population than two states (Vermont and Wyoming) and about the same as two more (Alaska and North Dakota). District residents pay \$10,841 per capita per year in federal taxes, more than any other state, the [Tax Foundation](#) reports. Yet taxation without representation, the rallying cry for the Boston Tea Party in 1773, endures in the capital of the nation that calls itself the world’s greatest democracy.

Giving residents of the District of Columbia the same rights as the residents of the other 50 states is a matter of basic fairness. H.R. 51 would preserve the constitutionally required federal district that houses all three branches of the federal government, our iconic monuments, and the National Mall. The neighborhoods and commercial areas where the people of the District of Columbia live and raise their families would comprise the 51st state.

The glaring lack of democracy in our nation’s capital is an embarrassment and a grave injustice. No other democratic nation denies the residents of its capital city the right to self-government. The residents of the District of Columbia deserve equal voting rights, autonomy under the law, and a meaningful voice in the Congress of the United States—just like the residents of the other 50 states.

For all of these reasons, we strongly urge you to support H.R. 51.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marc Egan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Marc Egan  
Director of Government Relations  
National Education Association