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June 21, 2021

Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator:

On behalf of our 3 million members and the 50 million students they serve, we would like to submit the following comments for the record of tomorrow's hearing, "Examining D.C. Statehood."

Taxation without representation was the rallying cry for the American Revolution, yet 245 years later it endures in our nation's capital. The denial of full representation in Congress—and therefore, full citizenship—in a city nearly half Black is egregious given our nation's history of suppressing the Black vote. No other democracy denies its citizens equal representation because of where they live.

Denying residents of our nation's capital full representation in Congress is unjust as well as dangerous. With over 700,000 residents, the District of Columbia has a larger population than Vermont and Wyoming. District residents pay the highest per-capita federal income taxes in the nation and in total, pay more in taxes than residents of 21 other states. Violent insurrectionists roamed the halls of Congress for hours on January 6, yet the District of Columbia could not deploy the National Guard because it is not a state.

The Washington, D.C. Admission Act (S. 51/H.R. 51) preserves the constitutionally required district that houses the federal government, our 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.

D.C. residents deserve equal voting rights, the right to self-government, and a meaningful voice in Congress. Please support this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Marc Egan
Director of Government Relations
National Education Association