

I grew up in Baltimore and Baltimore County, attending Franklin High School in Reisterstown. I was a Junior Oriole, and a Colts fan, and still bear a grudge against the Mayflower moving company. I lived out of state for about 10 years, and returned to live in Montgomery County in 1989. I am now a resident of Washington, DC, having relocated from Maryland in 2005 when I married my wife, who already lived in DC. I remember distinctly the loss I felt when I obtained my DC drivers license and handed in my Maryland license - I said to myself "there go my senators!" I remember fondly my Maryland Senators, including Charles "Mac" Mathias, Paul Sarbanes, and Barbara Mikulski. I still tell my wife "I gave up my senators for you" on a regular basis. Please grant her relief!

As a DC resident I have volunteered with the DC Vote organization to advocate for DC Statehood. It is manifestly unjust and contrary to (small d) democratic rule to deny citizens residing in DC voting Congressional representation. The failure of past efforts has led me to the conclusion that Statehood is the only reasonable answer. There are ways to work around the need for a federal district without denying the taxpayers of DC voting representation and the self-ruling rights that statehood offers. DC has more residents than Wyoming and Vermont, and pays more federal taxes than many states, and more per capita than any. It is manifestly unjust that we have no say in how these funds are administered, and also that Congress regularly interferes with our local budget and other local matters, and that the feds control many aspects of our local courts. Statehood is the answer. It is especially important for Maryland to support DC Statehood, as many opponents suggest retrocession, i.e. for DC to return to Maryland. Please support our efforts to gain the rights that every American deserves!

Thank you,  
Noam Stopak