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Dear Chairman,

I support HJ0008, a resolution urging the members of the United States Congress to enact federal legislation or propose a constitutional amendment granting legislative autonomy and statehood to the District of Columbia (D.C.).

In 2016, more than 85% of D.C. voters supported a referendum to make D.C. America's 51st state. For your reference, D.C.'s population of 705,000 residents is greater than that of Wyoming and Vermont. Furthermore, D.C. taxpayers pay more in federal income tax than 22 other states. And it manages and balances a \$15.5 billion local budget.

From a historical perspective, D.C. residents have fought and died in every war since the American Revolution. And we must acknowledge within the framing of this debate that our country was founded when Colonists refused to tolerate being taxed without representation. Yet D.C. residents *still* suffer under this very same injustice 247 years later.

This is a stain on our democracy that must end. I stand in solidarity with the American citizens who reside in our nation's capital in their fight for equal representation and statehood. For this reason I urge a favorable vote on HJ0008.

Yvette Lewis

Chair
Maryland Democratic Party

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