

# Should Washington DC Be Granted Statehood?

by  
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Unlike the ratification of other states in the Union, making Washington D.C. (DC) a state is fraught with many problems.

The first problem is that DC is only 68 square miles encompassing 693 thousand people. The smallest state is Rhode Island (1,034 sq mi) having 1.1+ million residents which makes it about 93% and 37% larger than DC respectively.

	<b>Size (sq mile)</b>	<b>Population</b>
Washington D.C.	68	693 thousand
Rhode Island	1034	1.1+ million
RI larger than DC by:	93.4%	37%

The proposed state of Washington DC would actually be even smaller than the city's current 68 sq. miles.

In 1790 the capitol district was founded and the City of Washington founded a year later. Efforts to make Washington a state have existed since the 1880s. In 2017, a failed bill was presented to Congress to make DC a state. In 2021 another bill was presented to the House (HR 51).

Arguments for making DC a state include:

- Right to govern
- Voting representation
- Tax arguments
- Human rights
- Jan 6 attack on the Capitol

Arguments against statehood for DC include:

- National capital should be independent from state control
- Shrunken capital would give the President three electoral votes
- Retrocession
- Voting rights reforms

Whether, for or against statehood, there are some serious problems.

DC mayor Bowser states that this is a civil rights issue. The decision of statehood should never be based on race or any other discriminatory factors. Making DC will not fix any racial inequality or injustice.

DC residents claim they are the only Americans not represented in Congress. That is patently false. Besides being represented as discussed further down, they conveniently forget that Puerto Rico (larger and far more populous) along with 15 other US territories are equally represented in Congress. Further Native American tribes (574 recognized tribes) are governed by district governments similar to DC's government. These tribes should receive statehood before DC since their people were here long before whites and blacks. However federal bureaucracy prevents that from happening.

Our Constitution specifically set aside land for the capital that was not considered a state but rather a federal district to be governed by Congress. While true that DC does not have any senators or representatives, it does however have non-voting representation in Congress.

Among the DC complaints is taxation without representation. Residents claim that they pay more taxes than residents in 22 states and pay more per capita to the federal government than any state. Taxation in DC is two-fold. There are city taxes and federal taxes. Federal tax rates are the same nationwide. Therefore, if taxes are higher than 22 other states, it is because city taxes are higher than 22 states. Statehood will not make the taxes lower. It should be noted that the city council makes suggested city tax hikes to the federal government which either approves or disapproves the rates. Further it should be noted that federal oversight of city government operations was enacted as a result of corruption within city government and that much of that oversight has been removed.

The claim that DC residents pay the highest per-capital income tax in the US is being misrepresented. The fact is, the higher your income, the more tax you pay. DC is known for being a high cost of living area, which means that incomes are higher than elsewhere. It is no different than living in New York City, Chicago, or California. Statehood will not resolve this issue.

As a state, DC would be able to have a National Guard. Claims have been made that because DC does not have a National Guard, it could not protect the Capitol on January 6. This is a false narrative. Under HR 51, the Capitol, White House and other federal buildings would not be part of the DC state, thus the state would still not be able to respond. The current problem is that there is no coordination between city and federal police forces, thus the city was unable to respond. DC statehood will not resolve that issue.

In US History, no city has ever been made a state. Territories have become states but they consisted of several cities, towns and separate communities.

For all the reasons DC and its statehood proponents have given, there is no viable reason for granting statehood. The DC already basks in the protections provided by the US government. Most of the injustices and disparities can be addressed by the city. So the question begs, what will DC statehood bring to the United States as a country and to

the people? From the Democrats' view, statehood will only bring two senators and a representative to an already democratic majority held Congress.