



The New Columbia Admission Act *Frequently Asked Questions*

How will statehood be achieved?

Statehood for the people of Washington, D.C. will be achieved by the House and Senate passing and the President signing the New Columbia Admission Act. Statehood legislation, which requires a simple majority vote and cannot be repealed, is the way that every state, except for the original 13, became part of the United States. The people of the District of Columbia voted in support of statehood, and they drafted and approved a state constitution in the 1980s. The next step is Congressional passage of the New Columbia Admission Act.

Is it Constitutional to reduce the size of the District of Columbia?

Yes. The Constitution sets only a maximum size, “ten miles square,” for the federal district that is the “Seat of the Government of the United States.” Congress has the authority to redefine the borders of the federal district and shrink its size, as it did in 1846, when the portion west of the Potomac was returned to Virginia. Creating the state of New Columbia will require a simple reduction in the size of the federal district to an unpopulated area which includes the Capitol, the Mall and the museums and federal office buildings that border it, the White House, and the Supreme Court, and key national parks and monuments.

Can New Columbia afford to be a state?

Yes. Washington, D.C. now operates as if were a state with the exception of federal control over our courts and people in prison for committing felonies in the District of Columbia. The District’s vibrant urban economy has a bigger gross domestic product than 16 states. Statehood will allow New Columbia to tap other potential revenue streams which are prohibited by the District’s Home Rule Charter.

Why is statehood important to the people of Washington, D.C.?

The people of Washington, D.C. deserve the same rights that the people in the 50 states enjoy. District residents are required to fulfill all the obligations of U.S. citizenship. Yet for over 200 years, we have been denied a voice in our national government and sovereignty over state and local affairs. Enacting the New Columbia Admission Act will at last give us representation in Congress and control over our state and local government.

How do members of Congress become cosponsors of the New Columbia Admission Act?

To co-sponsor H.R. 317, please contact Meagen Hatcher-Mays (Meagan.Hatcher-Mays@mail.house.gov) in Eleanor Holmes Norton’s office. To co-sponsor S. 1688, please contact John Kilvington (john_kilvington@hsgac.senate.gov) at the Senate Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee.