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A CEREMONIAL RESOLUTION

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

To recognize the 51<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the enactment in Congress of Public Law 93-198, the “District of Columbia Self-Government and Governmental Reorganization Act,” which granted the residents of the District of Columbia limited self-government.

WHEREAS, Washington, D.C. was founded on July 16, 1790, as the permanent seat of government of the United States, with Congress having the exclusive power over such territory;

WHEREAS, the “District of Columbia Organic Act of 1801” disenfranchised residents in lands surrendered to the District by Maryland and Virginia, preventing those persons from either voting for representation in Congress or organizing a unified local government;

WHEREAS, in the early 1800s, D.C. residents sought and achieved modest concessions in their attempts to attain self-government, including the right, initially granted to white male property owners only, to elect a mayor and a local council;

WHEREAS, the city of Alexandria was included as part of the District of Columbia from 1801 until Congress passed a retrocession act in 1847, returning Alexandria to Virginia’s jurisdiction;

WHEREAS, in 1867, against a presidential veto, the “District of Columbia Suffrage Act” extended the right to vote to all males residing in the District, allowing African-American men to vote in D.C. three years before the passage of the 15<sup>th</sup> amendment;

WHEREAS, by 1870, the population of the District of Columbia had grown to nearly 132,000 residents, with regional needs that outpaced the existing system of municipal governments as divided between Georgetown, Alexandria, and Washington;

WHEREAS, in 1871, Congress passed the District of Columbia Organic Act of 1871, abolishing the office of mayor and vesting executive power in the office of a governor, to be appointed by the president;

WHEREAS, Congress further restricted self-government in the District in 1874 by repealing provisions of law providing for the election of an executive, a secretary, and a board of public works;

51  
52 WHEREAS, in 1938, after a more than decade-long campaign by the Daughters of the American  
53 Revolution, D.C. adopted its own flag, noting that the city deserved more than just a symbol of statehood;  
54

55 WHEREAS, advocates for District statehood continued to raise the issue in Congress throughout  
56 the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with six bills introduced between 1948 and 1966 alone;  
57

58 WHEREAS, the 1970 District of Columbia Delegate Act allowed D.C. residents to elect one non-  
59 voting delegate to the House of Representatives;  
60

61 WHEREAS, William Fauntroy, elected as the first delegate to represent the District of Columbia,  
62 launched a vigorous campaign advocating for home rule and statehood for the District;  
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64 WHEREAS, Representative Charles Diggs, a Michigan Democrat, worked diligently as the Chair  
65 of the House District of Columbia Committee to build Congressional support for home rule;  
66

67 WHEREAS, in 1973, Fauntroy and Diggs championed the passage of the District of Columbia  
68 Home Rule Act, which established the Council of the District of Columbia and gave residents the right to  
69 self-government for the first time in over 100 years;  
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71 WHEREAS, the District will celebrate the 51<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the passage of the District of  
72 Columbia Home Rule Act on December 24<sup>th</sup>;  
73

74 WHEREAS, D.C.'s elected representatives to Congress still do not have the power to vote on  
75 final passage of legislation, including on legislation directly affecting the District;  
76

77 WHEREAS, despite paying more in federal income taxes than 22 states, serving the military and  
78 on federal juries, and bearing all the other responsibilities of citizenship, D.C. residents still do not have  
79 full rights to self-government and representation in Congress;  
80

81 WHEREAS, as of November 2024, the District of Columbia has designated numerous official  
82 state symbols, including a state bird, a state dinosaur, a state flower, a state rock, and, most recently, a  
83 state amphibian in the form of the red-backed salamander, whose stripes emulate the D.C. flag;  
84

85 **RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,** that the Council of the  
86 District of Columbia recognizes the 51<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the enactment in Congress of Public Law 93-198,  
87 the "District of Columbia Self-Government and Governmental Reorganization Act."  
88

89 Sec. 2. This resolution may be cited as the "51<sup>st</sup> Anniversary of the Enactment of the Home Rule  
90 Act Recognition Resolution of 2024."  
91

92 Sec. 3. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon the first date of publication in the  
93 District of Columbia Register.