

Senate Resolution 845

By: Senators Jones of the 10th, Orrock of the 36th, Davenport of the 44th, Anderson of the 43rd, Harrell of the 40th and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Urging members of the United States Congress to enact federal legislation granting statehood
2 to the people of Washington, D.C.; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, the people living on the land that would eventually be designated as the District
4 of Columbia were provided the right to vote for representation in Congress when the United
5 States Constitution was ratified in 1788; and

6 WHEREAS, the passage of the Organic Act of 1801 placed the District of Columbia under
7 the exclusive authority of the United States Congress and abolished the right of residents to
8 vote for members of Congress and the President and Vice President of the United States; and

9 WHEREAS, residents of the District of Columbia were granted the right to vote for the
10 president and vice president through passage of the Twenty-third Amendment to the United
11 States Constitution in 1961; and

12 WHEREAS, as of 2021, United States Census Bureau data estimates that the District of
13 Columbia's population is at approximately 689,545 residents, which is comparable to the
14 populations of Wyoming (576,851), Vermont (643,077), Alaska (733,391), and North Dakota
15 (779,094); and

16 WHEREAS, residents of the District of Columbia share all the responsibilities of United
17 States citizenship, including paying more federal taxes than residents of 22 states, service on
18 federal juries, and defending the United States as members of the United States armed forces
19 in every war since the War of Independence, yet they are denied full representation in
20 Congress; and

21 WHEREAS, the residents of the District of Columbia themselves have endorsed statehood
22 for the District of Columbia and passed a district-wide referendum on November 8, 2016,
23 which favored statehood by 86 percent; and

24 WHEREAS, no other democratic nation denies the right of self-government, including
25 participation in its national legislature, to the residents of its capital; and

26 WHEREAS, the residents of the District of Columbia lack full democracy, equality, and
27 citizenship enjoyed by the residents of the 50 states; and

28 WHEREAS, the United States Congress repeatedly has interfered with the District of
29 Columbia's limited self-government by enacting laws that affect the District of Columbia's
30 expenditure of its locally-raised tax revenue, including barring the usage of locally-raised
31 revenue, thus violating the fundamental principle that states and local governments are best
32 suited to enact legislation that represents the will of their citizens; and

33 WHEREAS, although the District of Columbia has passed consecutive balanced budgets
34 since Fiscal Year 1997, it still faces the possibility of being shut down yearly because of
35 Congressional deliberations over the federal budget; and

36 WHEREAS, District of Columbia Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton and Delaware United
37 States Senator Tom Carper introduced in the 117th Congress H.R. 51 and S. 51, the
38 Washington, D.C., Admission Act, that provides that the State of Washington, D.C., would
39 have all the rights of citizenship as taxpaying American citizens, including two senators and
40 at least one House member; and

41 WHEREAS, the United Nations Human Rights Committee has called on the United States
42 Congress to address the District of Columbia's lack of political equality, and the Organization
43 of American States has declared the disenfranchisement of the District of Columbia residents
44 a violation of its charter agreement, to which the United States is a signatory.

45 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
46 support admitting Washington, D.C., into the Union as a state of the United States of
47 America.

48 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of this body urge the United States
49 Congress to enact federal legislation granting statehood to the people of Washington, D.C.

50 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
51 to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to the public and the
52 press.