



WASHINGTON BUREAU · NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE  
1156 15<sup>TH</sup> STREET, NW SUITE 915 · WASHINGTON, DC 20005 · P (202) 463-2940 · F (202) 463-2953  
E-MAIL: WASHINGTONBUREAU@NAACPNET.ORG · WEB ADDRESS WWW.NAACP.ORG

## URGENT ACTION ALERT

**DATE:** August 1, 2007  
**TO:** Concerned Parties  
**FROM:** Hilary O. Shelton, Director, Washington Bureau

### **NAACP Urges U.S. Senate to Pass DC Voting Rights Bill Now** *Key Civil Rights Legislation has already Passed The US House of Representatives*

#### THE ISSUE:

Despite the fact that they pay federal taxes, serve on juries and defend our Nation in times of war like most other Americans, the residents of the District of Columbia are barred from having voting representation on the floor of the U.S. House or Senate. This classic example of “taxation without representation” is contrary to everything that this nation is founded on. This means that more than half a million people, more than 57% of whom are African American (with Caucasians making up just over 30% of the population and 8.5% of the residents claiming Hispanic background), are paying money to and dying for a government in which they have no say. It also means that the federal government is receiving and spending \$4 billion in taxes paid without having to account for it. In fact, the residents of the District of Columbia pay more federal taxes per capita than all but one other state.

In a key civil rights victory, on April 19, 2007 the US House of Representatives passed, by a bipartisan margin of 241 yeas to 177 nays, H.R. 1905, the *District of Columbia House Voting Rights Act*. The NAACP strongly supports the bipartisan H.R. 1905, the ***District of Columbia House Voting Rights Act*** introduced by Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton (DC) and Congressman Tom Davis (VA) and others as a good first step toward the goal of full voting representation in Congress for DC residents. H.R. 1905 would add two voting members to the US House of Representatives – one to represent Washington, DC and one to represent Utah (Utah narrowly lost getting an additional congressional seat after the last US Census in 2000; officials in Utah believe that thousands of missionaries living abroad were unfairly excluded during the Census count, which would have given them an additional seat.) This bill addresses the Utah concern and provides a “vote neutral” option by adding two additional seats to be represented by a Democrat and a Republican.

**We must urge the US Senate to continue the momentum and pass S. 1257, the *District of Columbia House Voting Rights Act of 2007* before it adjourns for the August State Work Period!**

*More...*

**MEMBERSHIP IS POWER! JOIN THE NAACP TODAY.**

*For more information, call your local NAACP branch or visit [www.naacp.org](http://www.naacp.org)*

## THE ACTION WE NEED YOU TO TAKE:

Contact both your Senators **and ask them to co-sponsor *THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA HOUSE VOTING RIGHTS ACT (S. 1257)***. To contact your Senators, you may:

✓ **Make a Phone Call:**

Call both your Senators in Washington by dialing the Capitol Switchboard and asking to be transferred to your Senators'/Congressman's offices. The switchboard phone number is **(202) 224-3121** (see message section, below).

✓ **Write a Letter**

To write letters to your Senators, send them to:  
The Honorable (name of Senator)  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

**A SAMPLE  
LETTER IS  
ATTACHED**

✓ **Send a Fax**

If you would like to send a fax, call your Senators' offices (through the Capitol switchboard) and ask for their fax numbers (you can use either the attached sample letter or the message box, below).

✓ **Send an E-Mail**

To send an e-mail to your Senators, simply go to [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov), and click on "Contacting the Senate"; you can look your Senators up either alphabetically or by state.

No  
time to  
mail a  
letter!  
Call,  
fax or  
e-mail  
today!

REMEMBER TO CONTACT BOTH YOUR SENATORS!!!!

### THE MESSAGE

- Despite the fact that they pay federal taxes, serve on juries and defend our Nation in times of war like most other Americans, the residents of the District of Columbia are barred from having voting representation on the floor of the U.S. House or Senate. This classic example of "taxation without representation" is contrary to everything that this nation is founded on.
- This means that more than half a million people, more than 57% of whom are African American (with Caucasians making up just over 30% of the population and 8.5% of the residents claiming Hispanic background), are paying money to and dying for a government in which they have no say.
- In a key civil rights victory, on April 19, 2007 the US House of Representatives passed, by a bipartisan margin of 241 yeas to 177 nays, H.R. 1905, the *District of Columbia House Voting Rights Act*.
- We must urge the US Senate to continue the momentum and pass S. 1257, one of the NAACP's key civil rights priorities in the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress, the *District of Columbia House Voting Rights Act of 2007* before it adjourns for the August State Work Period!

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION TO THIS IMPORTANT MATTER!!!**

If you have any questions, call Hilary Shelton at the Washington Bureau at (202) 463-2940

(date)

**Sample Letter**

The Honorable \_\_\_\_\_  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

**RE: CONGRESSIONAL VOTING RIGHTS FOR THE RESIDENTS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Dear Senator \_\_\_\_\_;

As your constituent, I am outraged that the residents of the District of Columbia do not have voting representation in Congress, despite the fact that they pay federal income taxes, serve in the military and on federal juries. This is wrong, and contrary to everything our nation's forefathers fought and died for over 225 years ago. I therefore urge you, in the strongest terms possible, to support granting Congressional representation to the residents of the district of Columbia. Specifically, I am asking you to support the "***District of Columbia House Voting Rights Act, S, 1257***". This bill passed the US House of Representatives in April 2007 by a bipartisan margin of 244 to 171. S. 1257 is an important first step in correcting this insult and aberration to the institution of democracy.

The residents of the District of Columbia – our nation's capitol and to many the seat of democracy – are the only Americans who pay full federal income taxes yet are not allowed voting representation in either the U.S. House or the U.S. Senate. This is contrary to the basic tenets of the democracy upon which this nation was founded, and is, quite simply, morally wrong. As a result of this law, over 500,000 people, over 57% of whom are African American, 30% are Caucasian and 8.5% are Hispanic, pay \$4 billion in federal taxes each year, yet have no say in how that money is spent.

By supporting S. 1257 you will be letting the residents of the District of Columbia -- as well as your constituents back home – know that you support and believe in democracy for all Americans. I hope that you agree with me that this egregious error needs to be rectified, and that you will support congressional representation for the men, women and children in D.C. Please contact me as soon as possible to let me know what you are doing to expedite passage of this legislation and what I can do to help.

Sincerely,

(sign and print you name  
and be certain to include your address)

DON'T FORGET TO  
CONTACT BOTH  
YOUR U.S.  
SENATORS!!