

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 9

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By: **Delegates Solomon, Ivey, Allen, Alston, Amprey, Atterbeary, Boafo, Chang, Charkoudian, Conaway, Crutchfield, Cullison, Davis, Ebersole, Edelson, Embry, Fair, Feldmark, Fennell, Foley, Forbes, Fraser–Hidalgo, Grossman, Harris, Hill, Holmes, S. Johnson, D. Jones, Kaiser, Kaufman, Lehman, J. Lewis, R. Lewis, J. Long, Lopez, Martinez, McCaskill, Mireku–North, Pena–Melnyk, Phillips, Pruski, Qi, Rosenberg, Ruff, Ruth, Shetty, Simmons, Simpson, Smith, Spiegel, Stein, Stewart, Taveras, Toles, Turner, Valderrama, Vogel, Watson, White Holland, Wilkins, Williams, Wims, and Woods**

Introduced and read first time: February 9, 2024

Assigned to: Rules and Executive Nominations

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

1 A House Joint Resolution concerning

2 **United States of America – District of Columbia – Statehood**

3 FOR the purpose of declaring the State of Maryland’s support of and consent to admitting
4 Washington, D.C. to the Union as a state of the United States of America; and
5 generally relating to Washington, D.C. statehood.

6 WHEREAS, Since the ratification of the U.S. Constitution on June 21, 1788, the U.S.
7 Congress has had the power to “exercise exclusive Legislation in all Cases whatsoever, over
8 such District (not exceeding ten Miles square) as may, by Cession of particular States, and
9 the Acceptance of Congress, become the Seat of the Government of the United States”; and

10 WHEREAS, The seat of the government of the United States, which was “for ever
11 ceded and relinquished to the congress and government of the United States, in full and
12 absolute right, and exclusive jurisdiction” by the State of Maryland in 1791, was
13 transferred from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to the District on December 1, 1800,
14 in accordance with the Residence Act of 1790 (1 Stat. 130), and was organized into the
15 District of Columbia under the entire control of Congress for every purpose of government
16 on February 27, 1801, in accordance with the District of Columbia Organic Act of 1801 (2
17 Stat. 103), through which the residents of the District were separated from the State of
18 Maryland and the Commonwealth of Virginia and ceased to be considered citizens of any
19 state, no longer entitled to all the rights, guarantees, and immunities of the U.S.
20 Constitution, including: the right to appoint electors in the Electoral College; the right to
21 elect senators and representatives to Congress; and the right to self–govern and ratify
22 proposed amendments to the U.S. Constitution, despite continuing to pay federal taxes,



1 serve in the military, and share all other responsibilities of citizenship of the United States;
2 and

3 WHEREAS, The Twenty–Third Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was proposed
4 by Congress on June 17, 1960, ratified by the State of Maryland on January 30, 1961, and
5 ratified by a sufficient number of states to become effective on March 29, 1961. The
6 amendment granted the District the right to appoint a number of electors “equal to the
7 whole number of Senators and Representatives in Congress to which the District would be
8 entitled if it were a State”; and

9 WHEREAS, Congress granted a nonvoting member of the House of Representatives
10 to the District on September 22, 1970, in accordance with the District of Columbia Delegate
11 Act (84 Stat. 845); and

12 WHEREAS, Enactment of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act (87 Stat. 774) by
13 the United States Congress on December 24, 1973, and the ratification of a Charter
14 referendum by the voters of the District on May 7, 1974, reorganized the District by
15 granting limited powers of local self–government to an elected, thirteen member Council of
16 the District of Columbia and an elected Mayor to “relieve Congress of the burden of
17 legislating upon essentially local District matters”. Congress, however, granted no local
18 control over the judiciary and reserved “the right, at any time, to exercise its constitutional
19 authority as legislature for the District, by enacting legislation for the District on any
20 subject, whether within or without the scope of legislative power granted to the
21 Council...including legislation to amend or repeal any law in force in the District”; and

22 WHEREAS, Historically, Congress and the President of the United States have
23 interfered with the District’s local self–government and Home Rule by enacting resolutions
24 disapproving of, amending, or repealing actions of the Council and Mayor, including by
25 rejecting actions concerning the locations of chanceries in 1979, sexual assault reform in
26 1981, the heights of buildings in the District in 1991, and a revised criminal code in 2023,
27 as well as by imposing budget riders that control and limit the use of locally raised tax
28 revenue for purposes such as reproductive health services, cannabis use, and statehood
29 advocacy; and

30 WHEREAS, On multiple occasions, a majority of the voters of the District have
31 approved initiatives and referendums expressing their desire for statehood, most recently
32 on November 8, 2016, in which 85.69% of voters: (1) agreed that the District should be
33 admitted to the Union as the State of Washington, D.C.; (2) approved of the Constitution of
34 the State of Washington, D.C.; (3) approved the proposed boundaries between the State of
35 Washington, D.C. and a federal enclave; and (4) agreed that the State of Washington, D.C.
36 shall guarantee an elected, representative form of government; and

37 WHEREAS, The legislatures of other states and territories in the United States have
38 introduced, debated, and passed resolutions that support admitting Washington, D.C. into
39 the Union as a state of the United States of America, and legal questions have been posed
40 regarding the State of Maryland’s involvement in and consent to statehood for Washington,
41 D.C.; and

1 WHEREAS, Despite the U.S. Constitution establishing that “New States may be
2 admitted by the Congress into this Union; but no new State shall be formed or erected
3 within the Jurisdiction of any other State; nor any State be formed by the Junction of two
4 or more States, or Parts of States, without the consent of the Legislatures of the States
5 concerned as well as of the Congress”, and despite the House of Representatives passing
6 the Washington, D.C. Admission Act on June 26, 2020, and again on April 22, 2021, which
7 would declare that Washington, D.C. is to be a “State of the United States of America, and
8 is declared admitted into the Union on an equal footing with the other States in all respects
9 whatever”, Congress has yet to grant full statehood to the approximately 700,000 people of
10 Washington, D.C.; now, therefore, be it

11 RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the State of
12 Maryland supports admitting Washington, D.C. into the Union as a state of the United
13 States of America; and be it further

14 RESOLVED, That the State of Maryland opposes efforts by Congress and the
15 President that interfere with local self-government and Home Rule in the District,
16 including federal laws disapproving of, amending, or repealing actions of the Council and
17 Mayor of Washington, D.C., as well as federal budget riders that control and limit the use
18 of locally raised tax revenue; and be it further

19 RESOLVED, That the State of Maryland calls on Congress and the President to
20 enact federal legislation granting statehood to the people of Washington, D.C.; and be it
21 further

22 RESOLVED, That the State of Maryland reiterates that the cession of land “for ever
23 ceded and relinquished to the congress and government of the United States, in full and
24 absolute right, and exclusive jurisdiction” now encompassing a portion of the District
25 ceased to be within the jurisdiction of the State of Maryland or “within the Jurisdiction of
26 any other State...or Parts of States” after the cession of land on December 19, 1791, and
27 came under the jurisdiction and “exclusive Legislation in all Cases” of Congress on
28 February 27, 1801; and be it further

29 RESOLVED, That the State of Maryland provides, although unnecessary and
30 redundant, consent to Congress to admit Washington, D.C. into the Union as a state of the
31 United States of America; and be it further

32 RESOLVED, That certified copies of this Resolution be sent by the Secretary of State
33 to: the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, President of the United States of America, 1600
34 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, D.C. 20500; the Honorable Kamala Harris, Vice
35 President of the United States, President of the United States Senate, Suite S-212, United
36 States Capitol Building, Washington, D.C. 20510; the Honorable Patty Murray, President
37 Pro Tempore of the United States Senate, 154 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington,
38 D.C. 20510; the Honorable James Michael Johnson, Speaker of the United States House of
39 Representatives, Suite H-232, United States Capitol Building, Washington, D.C. 20510;
40 and the Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton, Delegate to the United States House of

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1 Representatives for the District of Columbia, 2136 Rayburn House Office Building,
2 Washington, D.C. 20515; and be it further

3 RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of
4 Legislative Services to the Maryland Congressional Delegation: Senators Benjamin L.
5 Cardin and Christopher Van Hollen, Jr., Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510;
6 and Representatives Andrew P. Harris, C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger III, John P. Sarbanes,
7 Glenn F. Ivey, Steny Hamilton Hoyer, David J. Trone, Kweisi Mfume, and Jamie Raskin,
8 House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515; and be it further

9 RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of
10 Legislative Services to the Honorable Wes Moore, Governor of Maryland; the Honorable
11 William C. Ferguson, IV, President of the Senate of Maryland; and the Honorable Adrienne
12 A. Jones, Speaker of the House of Delegates; and be it further

13 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State is directed to send copies of this Resolution
14 to the presiding officers of both Houses of the legislature of each of the several states, with
15 the request that it be circulated among leaders in the legislative branch of the state
16 governments.