



DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

CLARE E. CONNORS
ATTORNEY GENERAL

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20 Attorneys General Declare Support For D.C. Statehood For the First Time

Honolulu – Attorney General Clare E. Connors joined District of Columbia Attorney General Karl A. Racine and 19 other state AGs in supporting Statehood for the District of Columbia. In a first-of-its-kind statement issued ahead of D.C.'s April 16th celebration of Emancipation Day, the attorneys general affirm that District residents deserve voting rights and autonomy and urge Congress to pass H.R. 51, the Washington, D.C. Admission Act, a bill introduced by Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton that would make D.C. statehood a reality. Emancipation Day commemorates the hard-won victory of the end of slavery in the District in 1862 but also serves as a reminder of all the ways in which the District's freedom and autonomy have not yet been fully realized.

This is the first time that state attorneys general from across the country have come together to support the District. The attorneys general write:

“The District’s over 700,000 residents work hard, raise families, and pay the highest federal taxes per capita, and yet they are deprived of the fundamental right to participate meaningfully in our representative democracy. The District of Columbia deserves a voice in this country’s legislature and should be able to govern itself like any other state. The District’s residents deserve equal voting rights and autonomy under the law. We support Statehood for the District of Columbia and urge passage of H.R. 51 to accomplish this goal.”

On March 8, 2019, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 1, a sweeping voting rights bill that endorses full congressional voting rights and self-government for the District. Meanwhile, H.R. 51, which would grant D.C. statehood, has garnered a record-breaking 201 co-sponsors from 42 states. Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi has

expressed her ardent support for the bill, and House Oversight Committee Chairman Elijah Cummings has pledged to hold a hearing on the bill later this year.

“The ability to vote is fundamental to our democracy,” said Attorney General Connors. “Hawaii stands with the District of Columbia because of our common interest in ensuring that these important principles are perpetuated.”

Statehood would place District residents on equal footing with residents of other states and give them a voice in decisions that already shape their lives. It would also grant the District local control of our criminal and civil justice system, which is currently administered directly by the federal government, and would allow locally-elected, accountable prosecutors to handle local crimes.

The 20 attorneys general who joined District of Columbia Attorney General Karl Racine and declared their support for D.C. Statehood are California Attorney General Xavier Becerra, Connecticut Attorney General William Tong, Delaware Attorney General Kathy Jennings, Hawaii Attorney General Clare E. Connors, Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul, Iowa Attorney General Tom Miller, Kentucky Attorney General Andy Beshear, Maryland Attorney General Brian Frosh, Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey, Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel, Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison, Nevada Attorney General Aaron Ford, New Mexico Attorney General Hector Balderas, New York Attorney General Tish James, North Carolina Attorney General Josh Stein, Oregon Attorney General Ellen F. Rosenblum, Pennsylvania Attorney General Josh Shapiro, Virginia Attorney General Mark Herring, and Washington Attorney General Bob Ferguson.

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For more information, contact:

Krishna F. Jayaram
Special Assistant to the Attorney General
Department of the Attorney General
(808) 586-1284
krishna.f.jayaram@hawaii.gov