



Resolution Number: 2012-C033
Title: Support Voting Rights and Representation for the District of Columbia
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 77th General Convention recognize that:

1. **The United States has been a vigorous human rights advocate for many years, opposing arbitrary restrictions on the right to vote and insisting on fairly conducted elections for legislative representatives;**
2. **As a matter of theology, the Church supports equal treatment of the fundamental rights of similarly situated citizens, including the right to vote for elected representatives who decide tax and military service obligations, as well as deciding the benefits of citizenship;**
3. **The U.S. Constitution provides for Congress to exercise exclusive legislation for a federal district, Art. I, Sec. 8., Cl. 17, to assure federal military control rather than rely on state militias. Not only has this military rationale been obsolete since the Civil War, it does not justify Congress denying residents of the District of Columbia voting representatives;**
4. **Congress has disenfranchised over 600,000 D.C. residents from having representation in the legislature that has exclusive jurisdiction over their city by depriving them of electing Senators or a voting member of the House of Representatives;**
5. **District of Columbia residents pay U.S. taxes and serve in the military. They have suffered casualties in every major war since Congress established the district;**
6. **The District of Columbia is the only capital of any democracy in the world where residents are deprived of the right to vote in the legislature;**
7. **Failure to provide D.C. residents the right to vote in congressional elections has resulted in taxation without representation, is racist in effect, and damages U.S. credibility as a human rights advocate; and be it further**

Resolved, That the Convention support the right of District of Columbia residents to enjoy the same rights as every other American citizen, including to right to elect voting members of Congress, whether provision of this right is by retrocession, by statehood, by constitutional amendment, or by congressional legislation; and be it further

Resolved, That the Office of Government Relations is instructed to work in support of appropriate measures to secure the right of D.C. residents to elect voting members of Congress, including appropriate interim steps to increase local autonomy; and be it further

Resolved, That in keeping with our Baptismal covenant to respect the dignity of every human being, U.S. dioceses, bishops, clergy and lay people are urged to support appropriate measures to secure the right to elect voting members of Congress to residents of the District of Columbia.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Indianapolis, 2012* (New York: General Convention, 2012), pp. 150-151.