The Rights of DC Citizens are in Your Hands

The 700,000+ people who live in the District of Columbia effectively have no vote in either the House or the Senate. Senators and Members of Congress have the power to remedy this whole in our democracy. But, many, many Americans are not aware of DC’s status nor how disenfranchised its residents are.

Time and again, when DC citizens have visited Congressional offices, we have been told that the issue of our unfair situation does not seem to come up from their constituents, so there is no reason for them to act on the problem. Yet, when people around the country do understand how our rights are restricted and interfered with by Congress, they say things like, “How un-American!”

Community groups like the League of Women Voters all around the country can continue the struggle for fairness and equality. They can support full and equal enfranchisement by helping to educate their communities about DC’s situation and how this problem can be solved through statehood for the commercial and residential parts of DC.

Here are some things you can do:

• Host a public education event in your community in the coming year. There are plenty of resources on the League of Women Voters of the District of Columbia website (www.lwvdc.org). Members of LWVDC stand ready to answer any questions, and to provide speakers and fact sheets, etc., to help you with this important educational endeavor. We can Zoom in for your event.
• Display the map that shows how the federal district will be preserved as our nation’s capital, with the iconic monumental core under federal government control. The commercial and residential parts, where some 700,000+ people live, work, play in their communities, will become the new state.
• Post our images to social media to draw attention to the problem and help people understand what it is like to live in a community that is subject to the will of Congress without full voting representation in that body. You can get occasional social media posts by sending an email to the address below.
• Appoint someone from your group or school to get occasional updates on this issue. This struggle has been going on since the establishment of the District in 1801 and needs continuing attention.
• Stay in Touch. Email statehood@lwvdc.org or go to www.lwvdc.org to stay updated.

The DC Statehood Toolkit is designed for citizens across the country to learn more about the District of Columbia and why DC Statehood matters to the residents of our nation’s capital.

The Toolkit is a joint project of the League of Women Voters Education Fund and the League of Women Voters of the District of Columbia thanks to a generous grant from the government of the District of Columbia.