

March 12, 2025

**Honorable Senator Chuck Schumer**  
Senate Democratic Leader Chair of the  
Conference  
322 Hart Senate Office Building

Washington, D.C. 20510  
**Honorable Senator Richard Durbin**  
Minority Whip  
711 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Cc: all members of the U.S. Senate

**RE: Vote NO on Cloture and Any Continuing Resolution that Threatens D.C.'s Autonomy**

Dear Senate Democratic Leader Chair of the Conference, Minority Whip and all members of the U.S. Senate:

On behalf of the 112 undersigned national and local civil rights, justice reform, democracy, labor, education, faith, environmental, and parent groups, we write to urge you to **vote NO on cloture** and firmly oppose any continuing resolution (CR) that removes the District of Columbia's longstanding authority to spend our locally raised tax dollars and manage its own budget.

The CR advanced this week by House Republicans steps away from decades-long precedent and opts to treat D.C. like a federal agency despite being a local jurisdiction of 700,000 people. The CR would force D.C. – already six months into the current Congress-approved fiscal year, to revert back to the previous fiscal year spending levels. This move would prohibit D.C. from spending over \$1 billion of its own taxpayer dollars, resulting in massive, preventable cuts across the entire local D.C. government and public sector. D.C.'s mayor has explicitly noted that if this CR is passed, D.C. will need to reduce its remaining funds by 16%, which would require implementing overnight layoffs, furloughs, and hiring freezes, along with significant cuts across public education, public safety, housing supports, food access, health care programs, transit, environmental programs, sanitation and more.

During the U.S. House Committee on Rules hearing on March 10, U.S. House Appropriations Committee Chairman Tom Cole (R-OK) framed the CR's impact on D.C. as a "minor adjustment that would mostly affect inauguration funding that the [District] did not need anymore" – noting that he did not think the CR would have any impact on D.C.'s day-to-day municipal services operations. Despite misleading rhetoric about the CR, blocking D.C. from spending over \$1 billion of its own local funds does nothing to reduce federal spending or shrink the deficit – it simply punishes D.C.'s local government and residents by denying them access to essential services, programs, infrastructure that their own tax dollars pay for. According to estimates shared by D.C.'s elected leadership, this CR would:

- Slash \$358 million from public and charter education, undermining school operations and staff;

- Cut \$28 million from the Department of Human Services, threatening infrastructure and supports dedicated for unhoused and low-income residents;
- Result in immediate service disruptions, widespread job loss across the local government and public sector, and destabilization across nearly every city agency;
- Complicate citywide operations that are essential not only for residents, but for the federal workforce, millions of visitors, and the broader regional economy.

In addition to the unprecedented attack on D.C.'s ability to self-govern, this CR also breaks from a long legacy that recognizes that the local D.C. government should not be held hostage during federal budget negotiations. Previous CRs have routinely included an exemption that allows D.C. to continue operating its local budget – ensuring continuity of services regardless of federal shutdown or gridlock. This CR intentionally removes this exemption, threatening chaos during potential shutdowns and ridding D.C. of the basic ability to keep the lights on.

These attacks on D.C. pose an existential threat to D.C.'s autonomy, but it also is a dangerous precedent. D.C. is home to over 700,000 residents – more than the populations of Vermont and Wyoming and comparable to states like Alaska and North Dakota. D.C. is not just a jurisdiction filled with bureaucrats; D.C. is rich with culture and vibrant communities including a 44% Black population. Yet, D.C. remains uniquely vulnerable to Congressional and federal overreach. This CR treats D.C. as a pawn in a partisan political fight, despite the D.C.'s exemplified fiscal responsibility and longstanding commitment to effective governance.

**This is fiscal sabotage, not fiscal responsibility.** Undermining D.C.'s ability to govern itself will have real day-to-day consequences for Washingtonians – while also sending a chilling message to state and local jurisdictions across the country. If Congress can haphazardly override an approved, balanced local budget, nothing stops this body or this federal administration from identifying comparable ways to overstep or roll back the rights of states and localities elsewhere. This attack on D.C.'s autonomy is part of a larger pattern of this administration's overreach – a calculated effort to target a progressive, Black-majority jurisdiction that overwhelmingly rejected the Trump/Vance campaign and their agenda. As proponents of justice, democracy, and fairness, we cannot allow this to stand.

All 112 undersigned organizations strongly urge you to reject this power grab by voting NO on cloture and NO on the House Republican CR. We call on you to oppose any continuing resolution that undermines D.C.'s home rule and budget authority. We also urge you to support restoring the longstanding exemption that allows D.C. to operate its local government independently – and, most importantly, protect the democratic principle that local governments should have the power to govern their own communities.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Sincerely,

A Little Piece of Light  
Able South Carolina, Inc.  
Adas Israel Congregation  
Advocating 4 kids Inc  
AIDS Action Baltimore  
AIDS Alliance for Women, Infants, Children, Youth & Families  
AIDS United  
American Academy of HIV Medicine  
American Baptist Home Mission Societies  
American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO  
APLA Health  
Arizona Jews for Justice  
Asbury United Methodist Church–DC  
Book Bus LLC  
Bread for the City  
Burroughs Elementary - PTO  
Center for Common Ground  
Clearinghouse on Women's Issues  
College and Community Fellowship  
Color Of Change  
Covenant Baptist United Church of Christ  
DC Appleseed Center for Law & Justice  
DC Chapter of Pride at Work  
DC Downtown Cluster of Congregations  
DC Justice Lab  
DC-CLUW  
Democracy 21  
Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund  
Disciples Center for Public Witness (Disciples of Christ)  
DMV Disability and Senior Community Group  
Dorothy Day Catholic Worker, Washington DC  
Dorothy Height Elementary School PTO  
Drug Policy Alliance  
Equality California  
Green Spaces for DC  
Fair Budget Coalition  
Faithful Democracy  
Feminist Majority Foundation  
First Congregational United Church of Christ, DC  
Foundry United Methodist Church  
Free DC

Friends Committee on National Legislation  
Friends Meeting of Washington  
Fundrise  
GKO Investments, LLC  
Greater Greater Washington  
Hardy Middle School PTO  
HIPS  
Horace Mann Elementary School PTA  
Humane Intelligence  
IFPTE Local 70 - Nonprofit Professional Employees Union  
Jews United for Justice  
John Lewis Elementary PSCO  
Justice Policy Institute  
K&K Analytics, LLC  
Kid Power, Inc.  
League of Women Voters of the District of Columbia  
League of Women Voters of the United States  
Legal Action Center  
Legal Aid DC  
LIFT, Inc.  
Mann Elementary School PTA  
Maury PTA  
MD/DC Alliance for Retired Americans  
Metro DC Chapter of the Coalition of Labor Union Women  
Metro DC Community Center  
Metro DC Democratic Socialists of America  
Mirror Memoirs  
Montgomery County Jewish Collective  
MVS Educational Services LLC  
National Cannabis Festival  
National Domestic Workers Alliance, DMV Chapter  
National Employment Law Project  
National Health Law Program  
National Organization for Women  
National Working Positive Coalition  
National Youth Justice Network  
NBJC  
Neighbors United for DC Statehood  
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice  
Office of the U.S. Senator for the District of Columbia - Ankit Jain  
Pax Christi USA  
People For the American Way

Positive Force DC  
Prevention Access Campaign  
Refining Resilience Therapy, LLC  
Reframe Health and Justice  
Reparation Education Project  
Shepherd ES - PTO  
Ship and Anchor LLC  
Sierra Club  
SMYAL  
Southern Poverty Law Center  
Spur Local  
T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights  
Task Force for Democracy  
Teamsters Local 639  
Temple Sinai DC  
The Action Lab, Northeastern University  
The Festival Center  
The Reunion Project  
The Sentencing Project  
Transformative Justice Coalition  
Treatment Action Group  
Trellis Climate  
United Church of Christ  
Uri L'Tzedek: Orthodox Social Justice movement  
Walking to Fix Our Democracy  
Ward 3 Democrats  
Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs  
We Are Family Senior Outreach Network  
Who Speaks For Me?