

There was no objection.

STATEHOOD FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I come to the House this afternoon because a very significant event occurred yesterday in the Senate.

The Mayor of the District of Columbia, the city council chair, a statehood representative, a statehood senator all came to the Capitol to deliver a petition from the residents of the District of Columbia. Residents voted 85 percent strong that the District of Columbia become the 51st State. At the same time, I introduced the bill to bring that about.

This afternoon I want to discuss why the residents of this city would want to become a State. I find that Members of Congress are almost entirely ignorant of the status of the District of Columbia, and, frankly, I cannot really blame them.

Members of Congress have no reason to be concerned about the District and its 670,000 residents. That is my concern. Candidly, I wish Members of Congress would not be concerned at all. There are a number of ways in which the Congress could leave the city alone.

Statehood is, of course, the ultimate reason and way; and it is the only way that the residents of this city can become equal to the residents represented by my colleagues. This is indeed, as we come now full throttle into the 21st century, in the name of democracy and of American values, why statehood for the District of Columbia simply must come.

On this House floor, the residents of the District of Columbia have no vote and, of course, they have no senators whatsoever.

What do they give to their country?

Let us begin with something very tangible. The residents of this city are number one per capita in the federal taxes they pay to support the United States of America. Let us translate that into a comparison to the taxes my colleagues pay. The residents of this city pay more in federal taxes than the residents of 22 States, and this city is not yet a State.

When a matter comes to this floor, every Member can vote on that matter, even when that matter involves uniquely the District of Columbia—every Member can vote on that matter, except the Member who represents the District of Columbia.

The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, where the Member representing the District can vote, just voted to eliminate a District law. Imagine that. In the United States of America, the Congress of the United

States, unaccountable to the residents of the city of Washington, D.C., on local matters can overturn a bill. They have done so in committee on an admittedly controversial bill.

I don't expect every State and city to agree with the District of Columbia on matters affecting our city. The DC Death with Dignity bill would allow people to take their own lives with a drug in their possession administered by themselves. In order to do so, two doctors have to have found that the resident does not have more than six months to live, among other requirements.

A third of those who choose this option in the United States never use the drug.

How do I know that?

Because six States already have death with dignity laws. That means 24 Republican Members of this House represent States that have death with dignity laws yet the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform under Chairman CHAFFETZ just voted to keep the District from doing what six States already allow.

This bill was introduced as a so-called disapproval resolution. Such a resolution requires an actual vote in the House and the Senate. It was introduced very late and taken up very late because I believe that the Oversight and Government Reform Committee and the Speaker of the House didn't want to bring that bill to the floor because there are six States that have precisely this kind of law and because there are 24 Republican Members who would be implicated and would be caught in a matter of supreme hypocrisy if they voted against the very same bill for the District of Columbia.

Yesterday, the Mayor of the city, Mayor Muriel Bowser, and council chair Philip Mendelson came to the Senate, who hosted us, to deliver a petition to become the 51st State. This is a procedure that is allowed under our Constitution.

It is a procedure that was used in Tennessee where all the prerequisites for statehood have to be fulfilled, the boundaries, et cetera; and you simply present a petition. That is how Tennessee and a number of other States became States.

I am very grateful to Senator TOM CARPER for hosting us in the Senate where we have no representation. Senator CARPER of Delaware is a champion of statehood. He has introduced this bill for years now and did so again in the Senate.

It is not unusual for Democrats in the Senate to support D.C. statehood. The four top Democratic leaders are among those who cosponsored the bill last year. I expect that to be the same this year because Senator TOM CARPER introduced the bill in the Senate yesterday, even as I introduced the bill in the House at the same time.

I want to just say, once again, how faithful and true to his own principles Senator CARPER has been in supporting

D.C. statehood and stepping out front to introduce the bill.

You might ask: What chance, with a Republican House, Senate, and President, do you have of getting D.C. statehood? Why would you bother?

No matter who sat in the White House today—and Hillary Clinton was a strong champion of statehood—we are about where we would have been. The work really isn't in the Presidency. The work is in the Congress and, even more so, in the District of Columbia.

The District of Columbia has to itself get this shameful record out of having residents who have served in every war, including the war that created the United States of America, paying taxes beyond those paid by other residents. This is on us, and we recognize it.

I think you will see a social media campaign informing the American people of what they do not now know because they wouldn't tolerate it if they did.

□ 1230

It was very difficult, until the age of social media, to get such word out without a massive advertising campaign. All we need to do now is use the existing social media, and I think we can change this shameful situation.

I am very encouraged by what has happened. Yesterday, 60 Democrats joined me as original cosponsors. An original cosponsor is a Member who stands with the sponsor on equal footing to introduce the bill. That already beats the record we set for last year when we had 93 original cosponsors in the 114th Congress. By the end of that Congress, 72 percent of House Democrats were cosponsors of the bill, and we could have gotten many more than that but for the logistics and the timing involved.

Our goal is to improve our chances for statehood every year; one way to do that is to get more cosponsors every year, and we are meeting that goal.

Why are we pursuing statehood? It is not out of hubris. It is not that we want to be like Delaware and New York. It is because it is the only way to become full and equal citizens of the United States, and because we have tried everything else.

Without statehood, Members will continue to bring our matters to the House floor for unaccountable Members to vote on them. Without statehood, we won't have the right to vote on this House floor. We won't have the right to vote in the Senate.

We have tried short of statehood. I pay tribute to former Representative Tom Davis, who, in the majority, sponsored a bill with me to get a House vote, only a House vote for the District of Columbia. This was a very important effort strongly supported by the residents of the District of Columbia to say: look, you don't give us statehood, let us get there gradually, give us the House vote.

Tom Davis saw that Utah did not have the House vote because their missionaries were not counted by the census, and they had expected an additional House Representative. The Governor of the State and the State legislature supported the action and most States have used similar bipartisan action to come into the Union.

This, of course, would have been only a House vote; one for very Republican Utah, one for Democratic D.C. This bill was passed in the House—thank you, Utah—and was passed in the Senate.

And the only reason the District of Columbia does not have a vote, as I speak, is because the National Rifle Association was able to place an amendment on the bill that, in the event D.C. got a vote, would have eliminated all of our gun laws, each and every one. A big city without gun laws, of course, is open territory, and we were left with the woeful and shameful option of giving up our vote, a vote we could have had.

We also have tried, short of statehood, to get budget autonomy.

Imagine bringing our budget, raised in the District of Columbia, \$7 billion, and asking Members who don't know anything about it to vote on it. That is what the residents of the District of Columbia have to do.

I pay tribute to the former Republican chairman of the House committee of jurisdiction, Oversight and Government Reform, DARRELL ISSA, who held a hearing when he chaired the committee on D.C.'s local matters, including its local budget.

Upon hearing the testimony about this district's financial conditions, its reserves, its growth among the best of the Nation, upon hearing in testimony from the Mayor, the city council, the chief financial officer, despite meeting those marks, then-Chairman DARRELL ISSA supported budget autonomy for the District of Columbia, and worked tirelessly for this goal during his chairmanship of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee.

So I am not here to say that there is no sense of a necessity to have something done, as you see that in former Chairman DARRELL ISSA's actions.

For that matter, Chairman JASON CHAFFETZ, last week, called for the District of Columbia to be made a part of Maryland in order that it would get Senators and Representatives. He wasn't joking. He wasn't making fun of us.

There has long been a small group of Republicans who acknowledge the shame of having almost 700,000 Americans without representation in the House and the Senate. And one of the easier ways to get it, they think, is to retrocede, that is the word, because the District was created out of Maryland and Virginia. Virginia itself cast off, the District of Columbia because it was afraid Congress would abolish slavery. So the notion is, go back to Maryland.

My first notion or response is: Have you asked Maryland? In other words,

you don't decide to reconfigure a State with a big city, and Maryland has only one big city, because you are fulfilling one value without fulfilling the other value, which is to make sure you have the permission of that State.

Now, Maryland has been a very friendly State to the District of Columbia. But the District is not asking Maryland to become a part of its State. We want to become the 51st State of the United States of America, and it would probably be easier to do that than to become a part of Maryland.

Now, we also are not insisting that there is nothing else that will do. We have asked for legislative autonomy.

Why should our legislation have to lay over here for 30 days, or 60 days? They must be legislative days, so that often means 6 months, 9 months, to give the Congress time to see whether the Congress wants to overturn legislation it had nothing to do with and knows nothing about.

The fact is that the legislative autonomy provision is virtually never used. Instead, the Congress tries to add amendments to the District's budget, a sneaky, easy way, they think, to overturn a law. So they keep legislative autonomy on the books inconveniencing the District and never use it.

They fear budget autonomy because they wouldn't have anything to attach matters to like overturning our gun laws. They regularly try to do that on appropriations.

So what you have is a kind of invitation for Members to interfere with somebody else's district, my district, instead of attending to your own business. People did not send my colleagues here to attend to the business of the District of Columbia, and we intend to call them out every time they interfere.

So, yes, we are struggling for the components of statehood, even before we achieve statehood, knowing how difficult and what a high climb that is.

Madam Speaker, could I inquire how much time I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. TENNEY). The gentlewoman from the District of Columbia has 11 minutes remaining.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, if there is such a thing as earning statehood, and of course there is not, let me indicate the ways in which the District of Columbia has, indeed, earned statehood.

Our economy is one of the strongest in the United States. It is a \$12.5 billion budget total. That is a budget larger than 12 States represented in this House by my colleagues.

How many of my colleagues can boast a \$2 billion surplus the way the District of Columbia can? That would be, of course, the envy of most States.

Our city has a per capita income higher than that of any State. We are not asking for any handouts. Our total personal income is higher than that of seven States. Our per capita personal consumption expenditures are higher than those of any States.

This is a prosperous district, that would bring luster to the United States as the 51st State. Its growth rate is third highest in the Nation; 1,000 new people coming to live in the Nation's Capital every single month.

As to our population, the population of the District of Columbia, is in the league with the population of seven States. We have a greater population than Vermont and Wyoming.

And, if you look at the seven States that have one Representative, as the District of Columbia does, then you will see that we are all about the same. Yet, those seven States that are about the same in population as the District of Columbia, each has one Representative and two Senators, while we are unrepresented in the Senate of the United States.

I don't even want to speak, but I must, about perhaps the most poignant reason why the District should have statehood. The residents of this city have fought and died in every war, including the war that created our country itself.

I remember coming to the floor on those occasions where we have voted whether or not to go to war, and on each of those occasions, residents of the District of Columbia have gone. I remember the purple fingers in Iraq and Afghanistan that signified that our country had given them the vote, while the very members of the armed services from the District of Columbia who had served came back to the District of Columbia without a vote themselves.

Is that an irony that this body can even stand any longer? Fought and died in all the great wars of the 20th century, and we remember especially Vietnam, when there were more District of Columbia casualties than from 10 States of the Union.

I don't want to go into the technicalities of congressional power, but Congress has the authority to make our city a State because of its Article IV, section 3 power to admit new States to the Union. When you combine that with Congress' Article I, section 8, clause 17 power over the seat of the Federal Government, which is what the District is, it is an accident, an accident of history that the District does not have the same votes as other Americans.

□ 1245

It is a slander to think that those who went to war on the slogan of "no taxation without representation" would leave any residents of our city without representation.

There was a march by Revolutionary War veterans when the Capitol was in Philadelphia that frightened, frankly, the Framers. So they thought: Well, you can't have a separate State, and it can't be part of a State, and we don't know what to do, so let's just make it a district. But they never believed that it would be a district without any rights, and that is exactly what it became.

Indeed, the District was carved out of Maryland and Virginia, but for the 10-year period of transition the citizens of the new district did not lose the votes in the Senate and the House. Only in 1801, when the District became the Nation's Capital under the Congress of the United States did we lose Senate representation and representation in the House.

Enormous change has occurred in our city in the 216 years since we became the Capital. I am a third-generation Washingtonian. My great-grandfather was a runaway slave from Virginia, so my own family has seen 150 years of those changes. This is no longer a sleepy Southern city where I went to segregated schools—segregated by the Congress of the United States, indeed, because it had the sole authority to do it. In fact, today, it is one of the most cosmopolitan cities in the United States, a city that people are flocking to for residence.

Everything about the District of Columbia has changed except its status and the status of its residents as second class citizens in their own country. We are sick and tired of being voyeurs of democracy. That is why the District of Columbia gave itself budget autonomy, although the Congress did appropriate a budget. Thank you for nothing. That is why the city voted 85 percent for statehood for itself. The citizens of the District are simply not going to sit still with the status quo. They are not going to sit on their second class citizenship.

So I come to the floor after we have brought our petition to the Congress to become the 51st State. I come to the floor the day after I have introduced the bill to put the Congress on notice: Be ready. Be ready for a campaign by the residents of the District of Columbia and our allies throughout the United States to be treated fairly, or as Frederick Douglass said, "not as aliens."

We can decide to get rid of this anomaly as we have so many others that deprived citizens of the right to vote, whether they were slaves or women. We have gotten rid of those. Statehood does not require a constitutional amendment. All it takes is the conscience of the House of Representatives and the Senate of the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. JORDAN (at the request of Mr. MCCARTHY) for today on account of personal reasons.

BILL PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported that on March 01, 2017, she presented to the President of the

United States, for his approval, the following bill:

H.R. 609. To designate the Department of Veterans Affairs health care center in Center Township, Butler County, Pennsylvania, as the "Abie Abraham VA Clinic."

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 49 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Monday, March 6, 2017, at 4 p.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

681. A letter from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Office of the General Counsel, Consumer Product Safety Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Safety Standard for Sling Carriers [Docket No.: CPSC-2014-0018] received February 28, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

682. A letter from the Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a Report to Congress on Gifts Given by the United States to Foreign Individuals for Fiscal Year 2016, pursuant to 22 U.S.C.A. 2694; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

683. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. ACT 21-621, "Constitution and Boundaries for the State of Washington, D.C. Approval Resolution of 2016", pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

684. A letter from the Auditor, Office of the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting a report entitled "Planning, Buying, and Implementing New Information Technology: A Case Study of the D.C. Business Center", pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 455(d); (87 Stat. 803); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

685. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final specifications — Pacific Island Fisheries; 2016-17 Annual Catch Limit and Accountability Measures; Main Hawaiian Islands Deep 7 Bottomfish [Docket No.: 160811726-6999-02] (RIN: 0648-XE809) received March 1, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

686. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Exchange of Flatfish in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area [Docket No.: 150916863-6211-02] (RIN: 0648-XE880) received March 1, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

687. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's tem-

porary rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Shortraker Rockfish in the Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska [Docket No.: 150818742-6210-02] (RIN: 0648-XE894) received March 1, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

688. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Several Groundfish Species in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area [Docket No.: 150916863-6211-02] (RIN: 0648-XE925) received March 1, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

689. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Big Skate in the Central Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska [Docket No.: 150818742-6210-02] (RIN: 0648-XE922) received March 1, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia (for himself, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. SERRANO, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. LEE, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Ms. SPEIER, Ms. MOORE, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. POCAN, Ms. NORTON, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. BONAMICI, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. RUSH, Mr. TONKO, and Mr. GRJUALVA):

H.R. 1299. A bill to suspend United States security assistance with Honduras until such time as human rights violations by Honduran security forces cease and their perpetrators are brought to justice; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Financial Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. MCKINLEY (for himself and Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas):

H.R. 1300. A bill to require the Secretary of Labor to maintain a publicly available list of all employers that relocate a call center overseas, to make such companies ineligible for Federal grants or guaranteed loans, and to require disclosure of the physical location of business agents engaging in customer service communications, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Armed Services, Oversight and Government Reform, and Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN:

H.R. 1301. A bill making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2017, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Appropriations,