

ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS  
**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM  
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**Statement of Rep. Henry A. Waxman**  
**Chairman, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform**  
**H.R. 1433, the District of Columbia**  
**House Voting Rights Act of 2007**  
**March 13, 2007**

Today is an historic moment. We are considering a bill that will help right a longstanding injustice. H.R. 1433, the District of Columbia House Voting Rights Act of 2007, will grant the District of Columbia a full vote in the House of Representatives.

District of Columbia residents have been denied full representation in Congress for over 200 years. District residents pay billions of dollars in federal taxes yet get no vote in Congress. This is not just unfair. It is undemocratic.

I have long supported granting the District a vote in Congress. I am pleased to have the opportunity today to move H.R. 1433 through this Committee.

There have been two champions of this legislation who have worked tirelessly to make today possible. Congresswoman Norton has brought passion and persistence to the effort to give the District a vote in the House. And she has worked day and night on behalf of her constituents to forge a compromise that has bipartisan support.

I also want to recognize the Ranking Minority Member, Representative Davis, for his work to bring voting rights to the District of Columbia. Last year, as Chairman of the Committee, he led the charge for voting rights for the District. And under his leadership, the Committee passed a similar bill, H.R. 5388, with broad bipartisan support.

The bill we are considering today, the District of Columbia House Voting Rights Act, includes a number of important provisions.

It will increase the size of the House by two seats. One of those seats will go to the District of Columbia and the other seat will go Utah, the next state in line to get a congressional seat. The bill prevents partisan gerrymandering by creating the new seat for Utah as an at-large seat and by ensuring that Utah does not redistrict its other congressional seats until apportionment is conducted following the 2010 census.

H.R. 1433 also contains a nonseverability clause providing that if a court holds one section of this bill invalid or unenforceable, all other sections will be invalid or unenforceable. This is an important safeguard because it means that a court can not enjoin or strike down the bill's provision creating a new seat in the District of Columbia without also enjoining or striking down the new at-large seat for Utah.

H.R. 1433 is an important step toward bringing democracy to the District of Columbia. I urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill.