

New Columbia Statehood Commission

Advisory Referendum Plan



*As presented at the Mayor-Council Breakfast
April 26, 2016*

A Bold Path to Statehood

- The New Columbia Statehood Commission has developed a plan to draft a statehood petition.
- On April 21st, 2016, the New Columbia Statehood Commission approved the statehood plan.
- The Commission is comprised of the Mayor, Council Chairman Phil Mendelson, Senator Paul Strauss, Senator Michael Brown, and Representative Franklin Garcia.

A Bold Path to Statehood

Rather than wait for Congress to adopt enabling legislation, which has been introduced repeatedly for more than a decade, this plan allows the voters of Washington, DC to take the steps necessary to qualify for statehood and then petition Congress to accept Washington, DC into the Union.



The Tennessee Plan

The comprehensive plan for statehood:

- Take referendum to the people.
- Develop and ratify a constitution.
- Submit petition to the President.
- President submits petition to Congress.

The Tennessee Plan

This strategy to statehood, known as the Tennessee plan, has been effective six other times:

- Michigan
- Iowa
- California
- Oregon
- Kansas
- Alaska

Creating Our Constitution

- The voters did ratify a constitution in 1982, but that constitution does not reflect the realities of our current governing system.
- Everyone can agree that, in order to become a state, Washington, DC needs a governing document to replace the Home Rule Charter.
- The Commission, guided by a team of constitutional experts, is revising and updating a constitution that will create an effective government, create as smooth transition as possible, and have support from Congress.

Advisory Referendum

The advisory referendum will be on the November ballot. Voters will answer a question with four parts:

1. Do you want to become the 51st state?
2. Do you ratify the state constitution?
3. Do you approve of the boundaries?
4. Do you commit to a representative form of government?

Congress

Only Congress can confer statehood. The Commission's efforts aim to give Congress a complete petition for statehood and remove any arguments against it.



Statehood Working Group

The committees are:

- All 8 Wards
- All Americans for DC Statehood
- Advocacy
- Communications
- Cleveland/Philadelphia Convention



Council's Role

- Participate in Constitutional Convention
- Hold hearings
- Approve advisory referendum and adopt the constitution
- Submit ballot language to Board of Elections

