



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®

The Voice For Real Estate®

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June 7, 2007

The Honorable Susan Collins
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Collins:

As the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee marks up S.1257, the District of Columbia House Voting Rights Act of 2007, the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, with more than 1.3 million members, urges you to vote *YES* in support of this legislation. NAR is one of the largest professional and trade organizations in the country. As such, it is proud to do business in the Nation's capital and to own a flagship building in the District of Columbia, as well.

In our organization's capacity as a District resident and property owner, we urge the Committee to give favorable consideration to S.1257, the District of Columbia House Voting Rights Act of 2007. This bipartisan legislation would, for the first time in our history, permit representation in Congress for the District of Columbia.

We believe that fundamental fairness justifies this change. It has been more than 125 years since the District was a sleepy city occasionally overrun during short sessions of the legislature. The city has become more than a single-industry town. More importantly, the city has begun to reverse a 40-year population decline. With this population increase, the city has taken on a new vitality as individuals and families from other parts of the metropolitan area and of the nation have returned. Homeownership in the District has increased in recent years.

The District's new residents, as well as long-term and even multi-generation DC residents, have the same concerns as all citizens in any other US city and play the same roles as any other citizens. They deserve representation simply because they are here, this is their home, they pay federal taxes and have local tax burdens similar to or even greater than residents of other major US cities. Quite simply, there is no justification for depriving residents of the District of the representation that is afforded all other US citizens and communities.

The NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® supports S.1257 and we urge the Committee to vote in favor of its passage.

Sincerely,

Pat V. Combs, ABR, CRS, GRI, PMN
2007 President, National Association of REALTORS®