

Attorney Kerwin E. Miller Testimony  
Before the House of Representatives Oversight and Reform Committee  
September 19, 2019

Good morning Chairman Cummings, Ranking Member Jordan, distinguished members of the Committee, and guests, I'm attorney Kerwin Miller, a Washington, D.C. born, third generation D.C. resident and third generation military veteran. As a 1975 Naval Academy Graduate and retired Naval Reserve Commander, with 28 years of military service, I'm particularly honored and privileged to be able to testify on behalf of our D.C. residents, especially our 30,000 D.C. military veteran residents. Joining me this morning, along with our other proud D.C. patriots, is Ms. Jan Adams, President and CEO of JMA Solutions, a D.C. veteran, who is a 24 year Retired Air Force Chief Master Sergeant, and my fellow 2019 D.C. Hall of Fame Inductee for business, and also joining me is Mr. Elliot Tommingo, the current Director of the Mayor's Office of Veterans Affairs, a 14 year D.C. veteran and currently serving U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Major. Together, we urge this Congress to enact H.R. 51 to provide for the admission of the State of Washington, D.C. into our Nation's Union. With the enactment of H.R. 51, Congress has the perfect opportunity to demonstrate definitively to our deserving D.C. military veterans and all of our deserving D.C. residents that our Grateful Nation appreciates and thanks our D.C. military veterans for their selfless and honorable military service! If I may speak to my fellow Veterans, on the Committee, Congressmen Higgins, Green and Steube, with your support, Congress can thank our D.C. military veterans by standing up for them now and doing the honorable and the only right thing and vote yes to approve H.R. 51. Your yes votes will unequivocally demonstrate that D.C. military veterans have more than earned this basic right to have a voice in the election of those who make our laws.

D.C. military veterans have fought and died in every American War since the American Revolution, and almost 200,000 D.C. veterans have served in the military since World War I. During Vietnam, 243 D.C. veterans were casualties of war, and that is a greater number of military veterans than 10 U.S. states whose military veterans have the right of congressional representation! My fellow D.C. military veterans are tremendous Patriots who have earned all the rights to which other Americans are entitled! As the first Director of the Mayor's Office of Veterans Affairs, I had the distinct honor to present a D.C. Mayor's Resolution at the funeral honoring the incredible military service of Trooper First Sergeant Mark Matthews, a 111-year old D.C. military veteran who served in World War II. Trooper Mark Matthews was the oldest living original Buffalo Soldier and the oldest living D.C. military veteran when he passed away and was laid to rest in Arlington Cemetery, with full military honors. Congress, stand up for Trooper Mark Mathews who honorably served, but still didn't have the right to Congressional representation! On several occasions, I visited the District of Columbia VA Medical Center and one of its assisted living residents, Corporal Alyce Dixon, a D.C. World War II veteran who served in the all black female 6888<sup>th</sup> Central Postal Directory Battalion of the Women's Army Corps. Congress, stand up for Corporal Dixon, a D.C. veteran who lived for 108 years, without ever having the right to voting representation in Congress.

President Trump said in his July 4th Independence Day speech on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, "We are one people chasing one magnificent dream." Congress, you have the responsibility to stand up for our D.C. residents and make sure they are part of the "one people" emphasized in the President's speech. Congress must fulfill its duty to stand up for our Nation's D.C. residents who have earned the right to full citizenship that is afforded all U.S. citizens.

Finally, there is but one conclusion - that D.C. military veterans have a fundamental right and earned benefit to have a voice in the election of those representatives who make our laws.

Attorney Kerwin E. Miller Testimony (cont.)

D.C. statehood is the only means by which our D.C. residents can have equal citizenship. Congress must now do the only right thing and stand up for our D.C. military veterans who have stood up for you!

This concludes my testimony. Thank you, in advance, for standing up for our D.C. Veterans and Residents and enacting H.R. 51 to make D.C. our 51<sup>st</sup> State. I look forward to responding to any questions that you may have.