

Norton to Host D.C. Statehood Press Conference with Mayor Bowser, Chairman Mendelson, and Senator Carper, Wednesday D.C. Leaders to Deliver Statehood Petition to Congress While Norton and Carper Introduce Statehood Bills

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WASHINGTON, D.C.—Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC) will host a press conference with District of Columbia Mayor Muriel Bowser, D.C. Council Chairman Phil Mendelson, and Senator Tom Carper (D-DE) for a dual-purpose D.C. statehood event on Wednesday, March 1, 2016, at 2:00 p.m., at the House Triangle (SE corner of Capitol). On Wednesday, Norton will introduce her bill to make D.C. the 51st state, with a record number of original cosponsors in the House. Senator Carper will introduce the statehood bill in the Senate. Norton is welcoming Mayor Bowser and Chairman Mendelson to deliver the D.C. Council's formal petition for statehood to the Congress, at the direction of the statehood referendum passed overwhelmingly by D.C. voters. In November, 85 percent of D.C. voters approved a referendum that asked voters "whether the Council should petition Congress to enact a statehood admission act to admit the State of New Columbia to the Union." The press conference is open to the public.

"No matter who was in the White House, our mission for statehood this year would be the same," Norton said. "Hillary Clinton was a strong supporter of D.C. statehood, but neither she nor any other president could make statehood happen. We had looked forward to the bully pulpit as a centerpiece for statehood, but the real work is done at three levels—in the city, in the country, and in the Congress. Only after progress is made in these major arenas does the president have a role, except for his or her advocacy, which if strong and consistent can be important, of course. On Wednesday our goal is to follow through on the will of D.C. voters, who approved the city's referendum advising the D.C. Council to petition Congress for statehood. At the same time, we will continue our efforts in the Congress to garner cosponsors for statehood. Each Congress we have broken our record for original cosponsors in the House, and this year we have reached a new mark for Members who will introduce my D.C. statehood bill along with me. Our goal is each year to show measurable progress, wherever it may be, until statehood is achieved."

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