

are going to do. It is an article published by Al Bawaba, published today. It says—we've identified Hezbollah as a terrorist organization. Well, the deputy leader of Hezbollah, Sheikh Naim Qassem, has said:

“The flurry of international activity, which is sponsored by the U.S., is not serious in ending the takfiri threat . . . He said Obama spoke of ‘containing’ the threat and not ‘stopping’ it.”

I am quoting from him.

“Comments made by Barack Obama are clear. The word ‘contain’ means to identify risks and disable some of its objectives while maintaining this terrorist organization’s role to frighten certain countries in this region and to keep this risk as a scarecrow in appropriate places to make political gains, particularly in Iraq and Syria.”

Our enemies know that this President’s speech last night indicated he’s not serious. We have got to get serious.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ROTHFUS). Members are reminded not to engage in personalities toward the President.

STATEHOOD FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today, because on Monday a very important hearing, the first of its kind in two decades, a hearing on statehood for the District of Columbia will take place in the Senate of the United States.

The hearing is called by Senator CARPER, the Chair of the Jurisdictional Committee. This hearing takes place at a time and in a season when we have seen unusual progress for statehood for the District of Columbia.

□ 1445

In the Senate, the majority leader himself became a cosponsor of the bill and indeed announced it with great energy, which is very unusual because the majority leader of the Senate cosponsors very few bills. The top Democratic leaders are sponsors of the bill. The bill has more House and Senate sponsors than it has ever had. Together this is normally seen as momentum, Mr. Speaker.

Now, when I say we are having the first Senate hearing in two decades, it is not because we haven’t tried to get a Senate hearing or because a Senate or House hearing on statehood was what was on the agenda for each immediate period. The District of Columbia residents have tried many ways to get their equal rights to other American citizens. There has been a House Voting Rights Act. I would have the vote on the House floor as I speak had an

amendment not passed that sought to wipe away all the gun laws of the District of Columbia. There have been bills for House and Senate votes. There have been bills for budget autonomy, and we are still seeking budget autonomy.

Through all of this, we have always sought statehood for the District of Columbia because, Mr. Speaker, there is no way for the District to get the same rights that every other American has without statehood. I will go into that a little later.

The Senate hearing is entitled: “Equality for the District of Columbia: Discussing the Implications of S. 132, the New Columbia Admissions Act.” That is the companion bill to my bill here in the House, H.R. 292.

I want to take a moment to thank Senator TOM CARPER, who is the new chair of the committee of jurisdiction, the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee. As you might expect, that committee has a lot on its plate, and, yet, in only his first term as chair, Senator CARPER has made many strides forward and always has been very helpful to the District of Columbia, and now culminates the work that he and I have done in the Senate with a hearing. It is a hearing that we, of course, requested, but it is a hearing that he had to be willing to do and find time for on a very busy agenda. I cannot thank Senator CARPER enough in the name of the people of the District of Columbia for affording us the opportunity to be heard.

We do not pretend that statehood is around the corner. We do know this: that if we do not continue to use vehicles like hearings to put the matter before the House and the Senate, and before the people of the United States, we cannot build to the point where we can achieve what we will achieve, statehood for the 650,000 people who live in the Nation’s Capital.

When I say this is the first hearing, I do want to say that Senator Joe Lieberman, who was the prior chairman of the Senate Homeland and Governmental Affairs Committee, was also a great champion for statehood. And while he didn’t have a hearing, he introduced a bill for statehood that achieved the majority of committee votes. And indeed there was a hearing for statehood when my first bill, the bill when I first came to Congress in the early 1990s, came to the floor and we got the first and only vote for statehood for the District of Columbia. There was a Senate hearing. It was not a jurisdictional hearing. And that is what this hearing is, and therefore it is a landmark hearing. It is a historic hearing. And that is why I felt it merited my coming to the House floor today.

On top of the momentum that we have now seen in the Senate, I shouldn’t leave the subject without mentioning the momentum that has been here in the House. We have Republican and Democratic support for

budget autonomy for the District of Columbia, for example. That is a very essential element of statehood, that is, your own budget, your own local funds, and nobody gets to look at it but you, your own jurisdiction. That is not what the District has now. That is what some Republicans and most Democrats believe we should, indeed have.

There is not yet the kind of support for statehood that I expect to see in the House of Representatives, but we will be glad to work with the Senate and the House when it lives up to its own principles that every American is entitled to be treated equally in the Congress and in our country.

Quite aside from the progress we have seen in the House and the Senate on statehood and on the particular elements of statehood, we now have the formal endorsement of the President of the United States for statehood.

I would like to quote what he said when he endorsed the bill:

I have long believed that folks in D.C. pay taxes like everybody else, they contribute to the overall well-being of the country like everybody else, they should be represented like everybody else. It is not as if Washington is not big enough compared with other States. It is absolutely the right thing to do.

I will have something to say about the population of the District of Columbia as compared with other States in a few minutes.

Now, of course, I wasn’t surprised that the President of the United States supported statehood. The reason I wasn’t surprised is because he has long supported and been on record as supporting all of the elements of statehood: budget autonomy, the right of the people of the District of Columbia, who raise \$7 billion, to spend their own money without coming to this Chamber, which has raised not one penny of it. He has long supported that and has put budget autonomy in his own budget. Legislative autonomy so that the Congress doesn’t have some say over the District of Columbia’s laws, the President has put that in his own budget. And the President, going back to the time that he was in the Senate of the United States, supported voting rights for the District of Columbia.

So there you have it, voting rights, legislative autonomy, and budget autonomy, the elements of statehood. We have Members of this House and of the Senate who have long supported all of them. We want to bring it all together with support of statehood for the District of Columbia. So there will be then a historic hearing at, I believe it is 3 o’clock on Monday afternoon with witnesses who are particularly able to speak to the issues.

Professor Viet Dinh of Georgetown Law School, a professor of constitutional law, a former U.S. assistant attorney for legal policy in the Bush administration. That made him the highest legal policy official in the Bush Justice Department. He has previously testified here in the House about the constitutionality of the D.C. House

Voting Rights Act. He will testify as to the constitutionality of our statehood bill.

Alice Rivlin, who, of course, was the Vice Chair of the Federal Reserve Board and Director of the White House Office of Management and Budget, and, finally, as a D.C. resident, was called upon by the President to chair the Financial Control Board of the District of Columbia, will testify at that hearing. Now, of course, Dr. Rivlin is an expert on the Nation's economy and on the finances of the District of Columbia. We are very pleased that Wade Henderson of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights will also testify, a longtime champion of statehood and equal rights for the District of Columbia.

The elected officials of the District of Columbia will testify, of course, the mayor, the chair of the City Council and I, and also the statehood delegation.

At the same time that we have been pressing on what amounts to two tracks for statehood, we have been making the progress I have indicated on the elements of statehood, such as budget and legislative autonomy.

In this House, we have got to work on what we need to work on all at the same time. There is no sequential matter when it comes to the many rights that the residents of the District of Columbia are denied. However, with the many issues on which we have struggled for equality one at a time, sometimes two or three at a time, statehood has always been what the residents—the American citizens who live in the District of Columbia—have needed and wanted. And it is during this Congress that statehood has gotten great footing.

I do want to thank the growing statehood movement and coalition, the many residents who struggle for statehood and have helped us in so many ways, including many in the statehood coalition who went around asking for cosponsors.

I think among the reasons that statehood has gotten so much momentum this year is that the residents of the District of Columbia are fed up with paying such high Federal taxes without equal representation in the Congress of the United States. They have simply had it on second-class citizenship.

As if to dramatize what it means to be a second-class citizen, there were several violations of the rights of the people who live in the District of Columbia as American citizens this year which highlighted the need for statehood. The House actually passed two provisions that would overturn laws passed by the Council of the District of Columbia, laws that were entirely local in their nature. Imagine what would happen if the Congress tried to pass a law to overturn some law in Maryland, Virginia, Oklahoma, Utah, California, or New Hampshire. People would think the Congress had lost its mind.

Because of the anomaly of the status of the District of Columbia as a district

and not a State, the Congress can meddle in—if you will forgive me—the local business of the District of Columbia. Two Members decided to and, in fact, got passed in this House bills that overturned our local laws. I am pleased to say that as of now those bills have and will not be passed in the continuing resolution that is pending in the House or the Senate.

Thus far, we have been successful despite the passage of these two bills. One of them was passed by Representative THOMAS MASSIE, a Republican who lives in Kentucky. He lives in a county of 11,000 people, but has sought and absolutely got passed in the House—a bill that would keep the District of Columbia—which has 650,000 people—from having any local gun laws. None. All the local gun laws would be gone. This is a big city, people. The reason big cities have gun laws of the kind that you will not find in Kentucky is because of the difference—the differences we all respect in our country. Moreover, public safety—think about it—is the quintessential local concern. You depend upon your own local officials who know you best, and whom you have elected to deal first and foremost with public safety. Nobody would try to tell somebody what to do about public safety in her own district.

□ 1500

Yet that is what Representative MASSIE tried to do. This is in spite of the fact that in 1973, though not yet for statehood, the Congress of the United States, recognizing how un-American it was to try to pass laws or to interfere with the laws of a local jurisdiction, devolved local lawmaking authority to the residents of the District of Columbia.

Until this year, most Members on both sides of the aisle had respected that. To be sure, we have had to fight them off in prior years, but we had a long run where nobody tried to interfere with the local laws of the District of Columbia.

Thus, it was surprising to us that Representative MASSIE, who is a Tea Party Republican, who stands first and foremost for localism, would leave those principles when it came to the District of Columbia and try to interfere with local matters in this city.

We had the same thing happen to another colleague, a Republican from Maryland, who should have known better, who has a particular distaste for the decriminalization of marijuana laws that is happening all over the United States—18 States so far, plus legalization in two States—so he tried to get a law and passed a bill, that we now have kept from getting through the Senate, that would block the District's recently passed marijuana decriminalization law. Our law would require that it be a fine rather than a conviction for possessing marijuana.

The District didn't do this for the reason that some States, the 18 States, perhaps some of them did—although

some of them may have done it for the same reason we did it. Blacks and Whites use marijuana at the same rate in the United States and in D.C.

Yet in the District, 90 percent of those who had criminal convictions for possessing small amounts of marijuana were Black. Half the population is Black; half is White. These laws have had an obvious racial effect.

I am not for smoking anything, but I must tell you I also don't believe that people ought to have a criminal conviction because they possessed marijuana any more than they ought to have a criminal conviction for possessing alcohol. In any case, whatever you think, that is not your business, it is a local matter, and the District ought to have the same right when it comes to local matters as they have.

This was Representative ANDY HARRIS. What was ironic about his trying to block the District's marijuana decriminalization laws is that he couldn't block it in his own State of Maryland, which has decriminalized marijuana.

Perhaps what pointed most to the need for statehood this year was what the District went through this past appropriation period when it almost got shut down, not because of anything the city had done, but because this House and this Senate shut down.

The District was an innocent bystander, but because the Congress still requires that the District's local budget pass through this House and Senate—the budget was here a budget of \$7 billion, raised by the people and the businesses I represent, not one dime of it Federal money, a balanced budget, the likes of which the Federal Government has not seen since the Clinton administration, \$1.5 billion in reserves, and there is virtually no State in the Union that has that kind of reserves—and yet when the Federal Government shut down, the District of Columbia was in jeopardy of shutting down—this despite the fact that I have a shutdown avoidance bill, that shutdown avoidance was in the President's budget, but not passed.

The mayor did the right thing, for the first time in American history. He refused to shut down. What are you going to do to him?

What he did instead was to keep the District open, but pay for our employees and our services out of contingency funds. Those funds were almost exhausted before the Federal Government finally opened up, and the District finally didn't have to worry about spending its contingency funds and got its local budget.

If you face our citizens with that kind of challenge over time, obviously, they begin to feel that they have to find a remedy. Yes, residents have been trying to find a remedy for more than 200 years, and there are interesting historical reasons why it hasn't happened, but whatever those reasons are, the time is at hand when it is impossible to call yourself the United States of America, which stands for equality for

citizens throughout the world, and not begin to apply that same principle to the people who live in your own Nation's Capital.

We have been preparing for this hearing for some time. We took particular pains on what is called D.C. Emancipation Day. D.C. celebrates this day, April 16, every year because it is the day that Abraham Lincoln freed the slaves in the District of Columbia before the slaves were freed in other parts of the country.

DC Emancipation Day, the District's way of saying there is an absence of freedom that still exists in your own Nation's Capital.

As Emancipation Day came—by chance, the U.N. Human Rights Committee issued a report indicating that the denial of voting rights in the House and Senate to the residents of the District of Columbia was a violation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, a treaty which the United States signed in 1992.

So let's be clear: by not granting equal citizenship rights to the people who live in the Nation's Capital, the United States, this Congress, is in violation of international law.

On Emancipation Day, I did not come to the floor to speak about the slaves. That was then; this is now. It has always been interesting to me because my great-grandfather was a runaway slave from Virginia and was in the District of Columbia on Emancipation Day, but Emancipation Day cannot be about nostalgia.

The residents of the District of Columbia put it to good use. I thought what I ought to do was, in preparation for what I knew Senator CARPER wanted to do, to come to the floor to speak about why we should have statehood—what is it about the residents of the District of Columbia that merited statehood?

Well, first, let's start with the most elementary of qualifications, and that is the population. Yes, this is a city. Yes, it is called a district. It is the District of Columbia. Yes, we have a population equal to, but in this case, larger than the population of two States that have two Senators and, by the way, a Member, one Member, to represent the entire State, just like I represent the residents of the District of Columbia—the states are Vermont and Wyoming, one in the West and one in the East.

What does that say to you? It says the Framers believed in equality. They wanted everybody to have representation in the House and the Senate. When there was a dispute between the large and the small States, they made a compromise and gave the small States equal representation in the Senate and what amounts to per capita representation here.

There is no question that there are enough people here for statehood. I mention Vermont and Wyoming because we are larger than those States, but there are half a dozen States which have a population about equal to that

of the District of Columbia. That is the first qualification.

Let's take a look at the one that will probably get the attention of more Americans than any others, and that is taxes paid. On our license plate, you will see the words "taxation without representation." Let's put that in dollars and cents.

We are not just talking about paying taxes without representation. I am talking about paying more taxes per capita than any other jurisdiction without representation, almost \$12,000 per resident of the District of Columbia in taxes paid to support the Federal Government, which does not reciprocate with voting representation in the House and the Senate.

I have the vote in committee. As the representative of the District of Columbia, I have the same rights to come to this floor and to do everything else that other Members do, except that which is emblematic of my citizenship and the citizenship of the people I represent, and that, of course, is the final vote on the House floor.

This poster is simply a graph to show you the vast differences in taxes per capita paid throughout the United States. It goes from \$12,000 down to Mississippi, which pays—Mississippi citizens pay \$4,000 per capita to the Federal Government, with the same rights that those who pay more, as should be the case, and it should also be the case that those of us who live in the Nation's Capital, who pay more and more than all others, should have the same rights as all others.

Just to dig down further into what this means, Vermont, which I indicated is a State somewhat smaller than the District, pays about half the taxes, \$6,000 per resident. Wyoming pays \$8,000 per resident. These are both compared to our \$12,000.

California, if you look at the large States of the Union, pays \$8,000 per person compared to the District of Columbia's \$12,000 per person.

Perhaps of all of the qualifications for statehood, none is more worthy of mention than the sacrifices District of Columbia residents have made throughout the more than 200 years of our existence as the Nation's Capital for our country in the wars of the United States, often suffering casualties above and beyond those of States that are considerably larger in population than the District of Columbia.

□ 1515

So let's look at some of the major wars of the 20th century.

In World War I, there were more D.C. casualties than in three States of the Union. In World War II, there were more D.C. casualties than in four States of the Union. In the Korean war, there were more D.C. casualties than eight States of the Union. In the Vietnam war, there were more casualties than 10 States of the Union. There is a memorial for the 635 D.C. residents who died in World War I on The Mall.

It is in that sacrifice that we feel most dishonored as a jurisdiction. How could our country continue to send our residents to war without granting those who go to war, often to get rights for others, the same rights that we afford every citizen of our own country?

All of the essential elements, even the one that is hardest to endure without full equality, all of the elements of citizenship have long been made by the residents of the District of Columbia, as well as all of the elements of statehood.

So why not statehood? That is a fair question.

What was wrong with the Framers? Why didn't they make the District of Columbia a State in the first place?

Well, nothing was wrong with the Framers. The District of Columbia is a historic anomaly. It is a figment of history and an incident in history that could not happen today.

The reason the District of Columbia is not a State is an accident that must be corrected. The accident came out of the meeting of the Continental Congress in Philadelphia in 1783. There were some angry Revolutionary War soldiers. They did what citizens do. I must say, though, that they went not only to petition the Continental Congress, but they took their guns with them. And while it is not said that a shot was fired, they did point their guns at the windows where the Continental Congress was meeting.

Well, the Pennsylvania and Philadelphia authorities didn't know what to do. They didn't want to go out after the Revolutionary War heroes, so the Continental Congress said: We better get out of here. So they fled Philadelphia.

Well, that stuck in the Framers' minds. They said: My goodness, States are not going to protect us, so I guess we must have a District that is controlled entirely by the Federal Government.

Well, when I say that it is an accident of history, do understand that that history is long gone. The way in which we protect the Nation's Capital today is the same way it would be protected in the event of statehood. The Federal Government, and the District of Columbia government—after all, it is the same area of land—get together to protect the District, whether it is from 9/11 or from any other threat.

You can't rest, then, on any notion that the Framers intended to have any residents who did not have equal rights. The existence of a jurisdiction that did not have full and equal rights was not in the capacity of the Framers to envision. Those who fought the Revolutionary War lived in the Nation's Capital, those parts of Maryland and Virginia which became the Nation's Capital.

The brilliant Framers realized that they did not have all the answers. They had every reason to think that this would be fixed. And one reason we know that they understood that things

could get fixed—shame on us that for over 200 years we haven't fixed this moral outrage—one reason we know that they understood it could be fixed is what they did to make the residents of the Nation's Capital equal in the first place.

During the 10-year transition from the territory in Maryland and Virginia to form the Nation's Capital, the Framers did not want those residents to be left without their equal rights for even one second. So while they had jurisdiction, they saw to it that during that transition period when they weren't really a part of Maryland and Virginia and weren't really a part of the new Capital, they would retain their rights.

Those people who lived in Maryland and Virginia who were on their way to becoming the Nation's Capital still voted in those two States and had every single right preserved until jurisdiction passed to the United States Congress. And that is when tyranny set in—the tyranny of not having that representation carried over under the jurisdiction of the Congress.

In 1801, when we became the Nation's Capital, the people of the District of Columbia went into the streets to demand their rights. They have been in the streets demanding their full rights ever since, as any red-blooded Americans would be.

Mr. Speaker, we have tried every route, some of it more gradual than others, to pursue and to obtain our full rights as American citizens. We have tried voting rights for the House, voting rights for the House and Senate, all other ways—budget autonomy, legislative autonomy. Even if we had gotten those, they would have been insufficient, but it says everything about the shortcomings of the Congress that even those insufficient routes to statehood are not yet a part of our law.

On September 15, there will be a full jurisdictional Senate hearing. That hearing will take place next Monday. That hearing will set an important guidepost. It will educate many in the Senate and House and many in our country about what the people of the District of Columbia, the Nation's Capital, do not now have and what they are entitled to.

There can be no doubt that no American would believe that those who pay taxes as they do should not have the same representation in the House and Senate that they do. There isn't any American who would say that the funds that are locally raised in your local jurisdiction should come to the Congress of the United States for any reason.

I do not believe that our problem lies with the people of our country. I do believe that many of them are not fully aware that their own Capital is less free than any part of our country.

So what we will hear on next Monday is not all about the moral reasons; some of them, of course, but also the reasons that go to our creed as Americans and go to practical matters such

as whether the Federal government should be able to close down the District of Columbia when they have a disagreement among themselves at the Federal level. We will hear not only the moral reasons, but the practical reasons for statehood.

So, Mr. Speaker, we seek statehood in the name of the people I represent, perhaps even more so in the name of the thousands of American citizens who happened to live in the District of Columbia and went to war for their country in Germany, Vietnam, Afghanistan, and Iraq but never came home, and in the name of those who will once again protect our country now that the President has indicated that we ourselves must take on the fight against ISIS.

On this 9/11, as we remember those innocent people who died simply because they happened to be in New York and Pennsylvania, I ask, Mr. Speaker, that the Congress remember the 650,000 people who live in the Nation's Capital, who are proud of their residency in the District of Columbia, many of whom, like me, a third-generation Washingtonian, are proud of their lineage in the Nation's Capital.

In the name of all those I represent, I ask for statehood for the District of Columbia so that our residents may have equal citizenship, those same rights which led the Founders of our country to create the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1530

EVENTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST WITH ISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) for 30 minutes.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the events in the Middle East and with ISIS, and I want to address three separate areas. The first is what should be the role of Congress in deciding American policy on these horrific events.

Second is to respond to the unjustified attacks on the President of the United States by those who claim he doesn't have a plan, doesn't have a detailed enough plan, doesn't have a perfect plan, or whatever.

And the third is to discuss what should be our policy in the Middle East and what dangers there are, no matter which policy we pursue.

As we try to protect our Nation, we should also protect our Constitution. Article I of the Constitution vests in Congress the exclusive duty to decide when we declare war, when we go to war.

Article II makes the President of the United States Commander in Chief of our Armed Forces.

These two provisions need to be reconciled so that both the Congress and

the President can make the decisions that the Constitution charges to them in our foreign and military policy.

This is not a new issue. President Jefferson sent our Marines, in the words of the song, "to the shores of Tripoli" in 1801. This was our first foreign military deployment. This was our first fighting and involvement in the Middle East. And most relevant today, it was the first use of our military abroad in the absence of a formal declaration of war.

Well, what did Thomas Jefferson think was the appropriate congressional role?

Thomas Jefferson sought and obtained advance authorization to put our Marines ashore in North Africa.

We still face the same constitutional provisions, but several decades ago, we passed the War Powers Act, a reasonable statute that harmonizes the two provisions of the Constitution that I have discussed.

The War Powers Act makes it clear that the President can act for 60 or 90 days without the authorization of Congress, but that is it. Beyond those time limits, deployments require congressional authorization.

Now, we have heard from the President that he respects Congress, likes us, consults with us, and would welcome our support. But the President, I am sure, consults with many academics and think tanks and foreign officials, not as a constitutional duty, but just because it makes sense to consult with them. And the President would welcome the support of The Heritage Foundation or The New York Times editorial board for his policies.

Saying that you welcome the support of Congress, or that you consult with Congress, has nothing to do with the legal rights of Congress and the American people.

Now, the President has taken a very unusual legal stance. He asserted broadly last night that he has the authority to conduct the bombing campaign, but he needs Congress to approve training Syrians and providing arms. This stands the Constitution on its head.

The main decision to be made here is whether we put our pilots and/or soldiers in harm's way, whether we wage war and cause casualties, and perhaps incur casualties. The far less important decision is whether we train a few hundred or a few thousand Syrians and provide them with weapons.

Keep in mind, this training and arming of Syrians has occurred for well over a year without congressional authorization.

What is happening here is the President wants us to vote in favor of his plan, or to take a vote of Congress and claim it is a vote in favor of his plan, when, in fact, we would only be voting on the smallest part of that plan, and that is, whether, without any risk of casualties to ourselves, without any risk that we would be directly causing casualties in the Middle East, to provide training to Syrian rebels. This is hardly what the Constitution requires.