

D.C. DISAPPROVAL RESOLUTIONS AND RIDERS

CREATED APRIL 2025

DISAPPROVAL RESOLUTIONS

Most forms of local D.C. law are transmitted to Congress for a specified review or “layover” period. The length of the layover period differs based on the type of law the District has enacted (60 days for criminal legislation and 30 days for other acts). The layover period excludes Saturdays, Sundays, federal holidays, and days on which neither the House nor the Senate is in session because of an adjournment sine die or pursuant to an adjournment resolution. In practice, the start and end date of the review period is subject to the interpretation of the House or Senate Parliamentarian. Under the Home Rule Act, any Member of the House or Senate may introduce a qualifying joint resolution disapproving a D.C. law any time after the law has been submitted to Congress and before the expiration of the layover periods described above.

SUCCESSFUL DISAPPROVAL RESOLUTIONS OF D.C. ACTS AGREED TO IN CONGRESS

- 96th Congress (1979-1981): S.Con.Res. 63 – Disapproved the Location of Chanceries Amendment Act of 1979.
- 97th Congress (1981-1983): H.Res. 208 – Disapproved the D.C. Sexual Assault Reform Act of 1981
- 102nd Congress (1991-1993): S.J.Res. 84 – Disapproved the Schedule of Heights Amendment Act of 1990 (building heights in D.C.)
- 118th Congress (2023-2024): H.J.Res. 26 – Disapproved the D.C. Revised Criminal Code Act of 2022

Please note, *H.Res. 208* and *S.Con.Res. 63* were adopted as legislative vetoes, prior to the Supreme Court ruling legislative vetoes unconstitutional in *INS v. Chadha*.

UNSUCCESSFUL DISAPPROVAL RESOLUTIONS IMPACTING D.C.

- 94th Congress (1975-1976): S.Con.Res. 78 – Would have disapproved a local proposed bond issue to refund loans made to the District from the Treasury.
- 96th Congress (1979-1980): H.Con.Res. 228 – Would have disapproved the Location of Chanceries Amendment Act of 1979.
 - S.Con.Res. 63 – Was adopted in lieu of this disapproval resolution.
- 100th Congress (1987-1988): H.J.Res. 341 – Would have disapproved the D.C. Prison Overcrowding Emergency Powers Act of 1987.
- 102nd Congress (1991-1993): H.J.Res. 158 – Would have disapproved the D.C. Schedule of Heights Amendment Act of 1990.
 - S.J.Res. 84 – Was adopted in lieu of this disapproval resolution.
- 114th Congress (2015-2016): H.J.Res. 43 – Would have disapproved the D.C. Reproductive Health Non-Discrimination Act of 2014.
- 118th Congress (2023-2024): H.J.Res. 24 – Would have disapproved the D.C. Local Resident Voting Rights Amendment Act of 2022.
- 118th Congress (2023-2024): H.J.Res. 42 – Would have disapproved the D.C. Comprehensive Policing and Justice Reform Amendment Act of 2022.
 - ACLU-D.C. was the local expert in defeating this disapproval resolution. A recap of this campaign can be found [here: acludc.com/hj-res42-recap-guide](https://acludc.com/hj-res42-recap-guide)

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CURRENT DISAPPROVAL RESOLUTIONS THAT COULD IMPACT D.C.

- 119th Congress: H.J. Res. 82 – If enacted, this would disapprove the Insurance Regulation Amendment Act of 2024.

RIDERS

Riders are additions to proposed legislation, which usually have little or no connection to the legislation they are attached to. For years, D.C. has been impacted by riders placed on federal budget bills by members of Congress who do not represent D.C.

Micromanaging D.C. is not what voters elected members of Congress to accomplish.

Congress has micromanaged D.C.'s affairs in the past in big and small ways. Some examples include:

- Dornan Amendment: Congress still blocks D.C. from using our own local tax dollars to provide abortion coverage for individuals enrolled in Medicaid – something that all other states are free to do. This rider is still being considered in the current D.C. budget fix.
- Marijuana: Congress has continuously blocked D.C. from using local funds to legalize marijuana, even though a majority of D.C. voters voted to make marijuana legal in 2014.
- HIV Needle-Exchange Program: Congress blocked D.C. from using our own funds to pay for a needle-exchange program, stalling the program by nearly a decade and costing D.C. residents' lives and money. A 2015 study showed that the needle-exchange program, once enacted, led to a 70% drop in the average monthly rate of new HIV infections among drug users.
- Traffic Control: Congress tried to prohibit D.C. from using any funds to implement a law that would ban right turns on red. Congress also tried to repeal D.C.'s use of automatic traffic enforcement, a move that would have spurred a \$1 billion shortfall. D.C. should be able to determine how to use traffic cameras to identify and fine drivers who violate traffic laws.
- Concealed Carry: Congress has included riders in the past that would make it possible for visitors with concealed carry permits issued by other states to carry their weapons in D.C.

