



HISTORICAL SOCIETY *of*
WASHINGTON, D.C.

presents

IS STATEHOOD POSSIBLE?★

DEREK MUSGROVE AND BOB LEVEY
DISCUSS HOW STATEHOOD BECAME
THE TOP STRATEGY TO GAIN FULL
CITIZENSHIP FOR DC

THURSDAY, JULY 16
7:30 PM EST



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The House of Representatives made history on June 26 by passing H.R. 51 to grant statehood to the District of Columbia, the first time a chamber of Congress has done so. While the Senate majority leader has already said that he will not bring the House bill up for a vote in the Senate, the House's action is giving hope to DC residents that they may one day enjoy the full rights of American citizenship.

The struggle for DC self-determination—the right to govern the city and for full representation in Congress—has existed since the city's inception. Early efforts focused on securing voting rights in Congress and government by locally elected officials. But since DC's limited home rule was granted in 1973, Congress has retained control of the city's budget and can reject the DC Council's legislation while initiating its own. Not only that, but the city's single delegate to Congress cannot vote on legislation. To right this wrong, DC activists have concentrated on statehood as the dominant strategy for Washingtonians to secure the full rights of U.S. citizenship.

How and why did statehood become the popular strategy? Why did late-20th-century efforts for statehood fail? And what role has race played in the denial of representation for this historically Black city?

Musgrove, associate professor of history at University of Maryland Baltimore County and co-author of *Chocolate City: A History of Race and Democracy in the Nation's Capital*, will speak with Bob Levey, former *Washington Post* columnist, on these questions. Their conversation will help us understand the historical context for today's ongoing push for statehood.

"Is Statehood Possible?" is the latest installment in our [Context for Today](#) series of online conversations with thoughtful and thought-provoking historians.

[REGISTER HERE FOR THE ZOOM-BASED EVENT](#)

Participation instructions and the Zoom link will be sent to registrants prior to the event.
Is Statehood Possible? is free, but if you are able, please sign up using the “Donation Registration” option to make a \$20 contribution to support this and other programs.

**This educational program is supported by a grant from
the [Office of the Secretary of the District of Columbia](#).**

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