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Julie Quinn and Penny Karr

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

D.C. should become state, not territory

Nelson Rimensnyder supported pursuing territorial status for D.C. because “the direct road to statehood seems blocked for the foreseeable future by opposition from both national political parties” [Letters to the Editor, April 10]. Making D.C. a territory is not a good idea.

First, Congress has fully as much power make “all needful Rules and Regulations” for a territory as it has to “exercise exclusive Legislation” over the capital. There is no requirement in the Constitution. It does not give a territory any better local government, more local autonomy or better tax treatment than the capital.

He continues that “by precedent, under our federal system of government, territories, not cities, become states,” but this is wrong as both constitutional law and as precedent. The Constitution provides only that “New States may be admitted to this Union.” The only prohibitions are against the formation of a new state within another state, or the junction of other states, without their consent. As for precedent, neither Texas nor Maine was a territory when admitted, since Texas was an independent republic and Maine was part of Massachusetts.

Finally, it is absurd to assert that “both” political parties block statehood. Both parties? Let’s look at the record. The 2012 National Republican Party flatly stated: “We oppose statehood for the District of Columbia.” Astonishingly, the very same platform supported admission of Puerto Rico as “a fully sovereign state.”

In stark contrast, the 2012 Democratic Platform said: “Every citizen of the United States is entitled to equal citizenship rights, including the 638,000 residents of the nation’s capital who pay federal taxes without representation. The American citizens who live in Washington, D.C., like the citizens of the 50 states, should have full and equal congressional rights and the right to have the laws and budget of their local government respected without congressional interference.” This fully supports statehood, which is the only sure source of equal citizenship and congressional voting rights and of independence from congressional colonial oversight.

Mr. Rimentsnyder’s own Republican Party is the sole party blocking statehood, in direct contradiction of the 1776 Declaration that governments “derive their just powers from the consent of the governed,” and in outright denial of Republican President Abraham Lincoln’s eloquent statement 150 years ago that ours is a “government of the people, by the people, for the people.”

Vince Treacy
Spring Valley

Deliver trucks jam Wisconsin Avenue

The quickest fix for some of the congestion on Wisconsin Avenue in Glover Park is simple: Prohibit delivery trucks from blocking the curb lane during the evening rush hour. Every afternoon after 4 p.m., the curb lane is intermittently blocked by various delivery trucks, causing traffic in the right lane to merge into the one open lane.

Unfortunately, we live in a city where for years city officials have said they would rather have people use public transit or bicycles or walk than drive. That dream is unlikely to be realized, given that our Metro system was designed as a commuter system rather than for intra-city transit, with the result being that large sections of the city are not served by Metro.

Given the city’s bias against automobiles, we are unlikely to see the city take any serious action to improve congestion such as enforcing rush-hour parking rules or — imagine this — putting traffic personnel in major downtown intersections to prevent “blocking the box.”

Hayes Browning
Cathedral Heights