



Lost Their Bearings

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“Washington, D.C. should have every right to set its own rules and policies, just as Vermont does,” [argues](#) Sen. Peter Welch (D-VT).

“The micromanagement by congressional Republicans and Trump must end.”

First, the District of Columbia is *not* a state. Vermont is, if you’re playing at home.

Second, Congress and the President have constitutional authority and responsibility for our nation’s capital. Article 1, Section 8, [Clause 17](#) of the U.S. Constitution specifically empowers Congress “To exercise exclusive Legislation in all Cases whatsoever, over such District (not exceeding ten Miles square) as may, by Cession of particular States, and the Acceptance of Congress, become the Seat of Government of the United States ...”

Sen. Welch’s comments above, from last week’s *Washingtonian* magazine article, were in defense of the noncitizen voting law passed by the D.C. City Council, which every Republican in the U.S. House—joined by 56 Democrats—voted to repeal. (Senate action awaits.) The Vermont senator was featured because three Vermont cities also allow noncitizens to vote.

I oppose the laws in those three Vermont cities as well as in our nation’s capital. But Washington, D.C.’s law is the worst.

Why? It allows noncitizens in the country *illegally* to vote. It offers the vote even to foreign nationals working in the embassies of hostile powers. For instance, China’s and Russia’s ambassadors could decide who the next mayor is ... or pass or defeat ballot measures.

Make any sense? Not a lick.

One new local D.C. officeholder is Mónica López. She is not really a “noncitizen,” just a citizen of Mexico. And one of three non-U.S. citizens who were elected to Washington’s powerless neighborhood advisory council.

“It’s incredibly local,” López offers. “It has no bearing over anything federal.”

Really? None? She’s in a federal enclave, where the feds do their million-billion things, and what she’s up to has *no bearing* on it?

This is Common Sense. I’m Paul Jacob.