

before Congress was a two-fold issue. One, whether to grant statehood, or two, rather to provide for a constitutional amendment which would be far more difficult to achieve, which would grant a special status to the District of Columbia and grant them voting representation in Congress. Now the situation is simply this. There are a number of ways in which representation can be granted. The whole issue is the question of representation. The question of statehood was debated before the Congress, and I think the Congress opted in the wrong decision, and for that reason I think it is germane, and I think that on that basis I would like to further debate this and have the state of Nebraska come out in favor of this.

PRESIDENT: Senator Newell, without going further into this amendment, the Chair is going to rule it is germane. I have looked at it. I feel it is germane. Proceed with your amendment.

SENATOR NEWELL: Mr. President and members of the body, I think it is important to understand what this proposal that is before the states as a constitutional amendment is. Now I would like to remind people that no other state in the Union has been given representation by an act of the constitution. This is a special agreement. This is a special arrangement. The Congress of the United States rejected the option of statehood, and instead opted for this special arrangement and the reason they did that was simply this. They like to keep the District of Columbia as chattels, as dependent, as a special arrangement different from every other state in the Union, and I think that is a wrong decision, and I think that if this amendment, if we reject this, and if this amendment to the constitution is rejected, that the option of statehood, which is so much easier to be granted, which will give the District of Columbia full voting rights as a state and grant them not only the rights that are outlined in this proposal but additional rights, the rights to ratify amendments and those kinds of things, the things that we tried to prevent, the things that the Congress of the United States tried to prevent. They tried to keep the District of Columbia in a special arrangement as chattels. Now I think that they should have opted for statehood. There is a statehood party and a strong statehood party in the District of Columbia and that party rightfully has asked and rightfully demands that they be granted statehood. I have heard spurious arguments on the floor of the Legislature, most of them promulgated by the chief sponsor of this proposal, Senator Haberman. Those spurious arguments include...is that a signal? It is one of my better speeches, if I just had a voice...I am coming out punching, I don't know which...