

# EXHIBIT 5

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## RICHARD NIXON

XXXVII President of the United States: 1969-1974

### 370 - Statement on Signing the District of Columbia Self-Government and Governmental Reorganization Act.

December 24, 1973



Tweet 1,380

AS a longtime supporter of self-government for the District of Columbia, I am pleased to sign into law a measure which is of historic significance for the citizens of our Nation's Capital. I first voted for home rule as a Member of the House of Representatives in 1948, and I have endorsed the enactment of home rule legislation during both my terms as President.

One of the major goals of this Administration is to place responsibility for local functions under local control and to provide local governments with the authority and resources they need to serve their communities effectively. The measure I sign today represents a significant step in achieving this goal in the city of Washington. It will give the people of the District of Columbia the right to elect their own city officials and to govern themselves in local affairs. As the Nation approaches the 200th anniversary of its founding, it is particularly appropriate to assure those persons who live in our Capital City rights and privileges which have long been enjoyed by most of their countrymen.

But the measure I sign today does more than create machinery for the election of local officials. It also broadens and strengthens the structure of the city government to enable it to deal more effectively with its responsibilities. For example, this legislation transfers to the city government control over certain quasi-Federal agencies: the Redevelopment Land Agency, the District of Columbia Manpower Administration, the National Capital Housing Authority, and the local planning functions of the National Capital Planning Commission. These steps are in accord with the recommendations of the Commission on the Organization of the Government of the District of Columbia, known also as the Nelsen Commission. By making such transfers, the bill will end the fragmentation of authority over the city's physical planning, housing, community development, and manpower programs, steps which are essential to the development of the city's neighborhoods, to the health of its economy, to the effective coordination of its public services, and to the overall success of self-government.

Under this legislation, the increased authority for local government will be vested in an elected mayor and a 13-member council, headed by an elected chairman. The measure also contains a provision to assure minority political party representation on the council.

In addition, the bill also provides broad revenue raising authority for the city, enabling the people through their elected representatives to determine how to pay for the services they require. At the same time, final Congressional review of the District's appropriation process is retained under this measure.

It is also important for the city to receive a predictable Federal payment. Only then can it plan its finances in a rational manner. The bill, therefore, provides for an increasing multiyear authorization for Federal payments to the city, giving greater predictability to the Federal payment than has previously existed. As the principal employer in Washington, D.C., the Federal Government recognizes its responsibility to pay its fair share of the operations of the District government.

The measure I sign today also empowers the city to issue its own obligations, while providing financially sound limitations to its borrowing authority comparable to those which exist in most other municipalities in the United States.

The District of Columbia is a unique combination of Federal and local concerns, each of which must be satisfied. All in all, I believe this legislation skillfully balances the local interest and the national interest in the way the District of Columbia is governed. I am pleased that the bill has enjoyed bipartisan support throughout the Congressional deliberations, and I am proud to join the Congress in pledging the full support of my Administration to make self-government a success in the District of Columbia.

Note: As enacted, the bill (S. 1435) is Public Law 93-198 (87 Stat. 774).

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Richard Nixon 1973

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