

Citizens' Joint Committee on National Representation for the District of Columbia Records

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Prepared by Manuscript Division Staff

Collection Summary

Title: Citizen's Joint Committee on National Representation for the District of Columbia Records

Span Dates: 1926-1961

ID No.: MSS15859

Creator: Citizen's Joint Committee on National Representation for the District of Columbia

Extent: 2,100 items ; 7 containers ; 2.8 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Summary: Organization that lobbied for the passage of the Twenty-third Amendment to the Constitution allowing the citizens of the District of Columbia to vote in presidential elections. Correspondence with members of Congress, records of congressional hearings, publicity materials, lists of local groups backing the Twenty-third Amendment, and a file by state showing contacts made by the committee with leaders of the various state legislatures.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Organizations

Citizens' Joint Committee on National Representation for the District of Columbia.

United States. Congress. House. Committee on Rules.

United States. Congress. House. Committee on the Judiciary.

United States. Constitution. 23rd Amendment.

Subjects

Constitutional amendments--United States.

Presidents--United States--Election.

Suffrage--Washington (D.C.)

Places

Washington (D.C.)--Politics and government.

Administrative Information

Provenance

The records of the Citizens' Joint Committee on National Representation for the District of Columbia were given to the Library of Congress by the committee in 1961.

Copyright Status

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings in the records of the Citizens' Joint Committee on National Representation for the District of Columbia is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions

The records of the Citizens' Joint Committee on National Representation for the District of Columbia are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Citizens' Joint Committee on National Representation for the District of Columbia Records, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Organizational History

The Citizens' Joint Committee on National Representation for the District of Columbia was formed in 1916 and was comprised of thirty local organizations. The committee's activities became dormant after the American entry into World War I, but were revitalized during the 1920s through the early 1940s under the leadership of Theodore W. Noyes. The objective of the committee was a constitutional amendment granting District of Columbia citizens the right to votes in both houses of Congress and the Electoral College. In 1960, when the Senate passed a civil rights bill that included District voting rights, District officials reactivated the joint committee to provide support for the bill during House hearings. In the House, the bill was first reduced to include only voting rights for the District of Columbia, the national anti-poll tax provision having been dropped. Eventually, only voting rights in the Electoral College were approved. The Twenty-third Amendment granting the District the right to vote in presidential elections passed Congress in 1960. At this point, the committee lobbied individual states for its quick passage. The Twenty-third Amendment was ratified in 1961.

Scope and Content Note

The Citizens' Joint Committee on National Representation for the District of Columbia lobbied for the passage of the Twenty-third Amendment to the U.S. Constitution which, in 1961, granted the citizens of the District of Columbia the right to vote in presidential elections. The records of the organization span the years 1926-1961 and are organized into five series: [Miscellaneous](#), [Old Records](#), [Political](#), and [Publicity](#). The papers include correspondence with members of Congress, chiefly members of the Committee on the Judiciary and the Committee on Rules; records of congressional hearings; publicity materials; lists of local groups backing the Twenty-third Amendment; and a file by state showing contacts made by the committee with leaders of the various state legislatures.

The series "[Old Records](#)" contains committee files primarily from the 1920s through the early 1940s when, under the leadership of Theodore W. Noyes, the committee worked to build support for a constitutional amendment to grant full voting rights to District citizens. The series includes correspondence, minutes of meetings, lists of members, and official endorsements from organizations.

Arrangement of the Records

This collection is arranged in four series:

- [Miscellaneous, 1947-1961](#)
- [Old Records, 1926-1945](#)
- [Political, 1955-1961](#)
- [Publicity, 1960-1961](#)

Description of Series

| <i>Container</i> | <i>Series</i> |
|------------------|--|
| BOX 1 | <u>Miscellaneous, 1947-1961</u> Memoranda, proposals, printed matter, and miscellaneous material relating to the effort to pass the Twenty-third Amendment. Arranged alphabetically by type of material. |
| BOX 2 | <u>Old Records, 1926-1945</u> Correspondence, minutes of meetings, lists of members, and endorsements from organizations. Arranged alphabetically by type of material. |
| BOX 3-6 | <u>Political, 1955-1961</u> Draft legislation, weekly status reports and memoranda, files on state legislatures and lobbying files for each state. Arranged alphabetically by type of material. |
| BOX 7 | <u>Publicity, 1960-1961</u> Press releases, printed matter, information files. Arranged alphabetically by type of material or subject matter. |

Container List

| <i>Container</i> | <i>Contents</i> |
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| BOX 1 | Miscellaneous, 1947-1961 Memoranda, proposals, printed matter, and miscellaneous material relating to the effort to pass the Twenty-third Amendment. Arranged alphabetically by type of material. |
| BOX 1 | Brochures and text, 1960 |
| BOX 1 | Copies of petition regarding S.J.R. 39 and H.J.R. 529 |
| BOX 1 | Copies of suggested statement for hearing |
| BOX 1 | General memorandum to committee, 1961, Mar. 31 |
| BOX 1 | List of petitioners, 1960, Apr. |
| BOX 1 | Memorandum to Citizen Committee member regarding Twenty-third Amendment, 1961 |
| BOX 1 | Memorandum regarding Citizens Joint Committee, 1960, Feb. 11 |
| BOX 1 | Memoranda to Executive Board, 1960, Mar.-May (6 folders) |
| BOX 1 | Memorandum to Joint Committee, 1960 |
| BOX 1 | Memorandum to officers and members of Executive Board, 1961 |
| BOX 1 | Model ratifying amendment, 1961 |
| BOX 1 | Outline of plan for ratification drive, 1960 |
| BOX 1 | Proposed bill to regulate election, 1961 |
| BOX 1 | Proposed enabling legislation, 1961 |
| BOX 1 | Sampler of state amendments (photocopies), 1947-1951 |
| BOX 1 | Status report, 1961, Jan.-Mar. (9 folders) |
| BOX 1 | Text of proposed law, 1961, Apr. 2 |
| BOX 1 | Thank-you letter |
| BOX 1 | Financial file, 1952-1953 |
| BOX 2 | Old Records, 1926-1945 Correspondence, minutes of meetings, lists of members, and endorsements from organizations. Arranged alphabetically by type of material. |
| BOX 2 | Committee on Campaign in the States, 1929, 1937 |
| BOX 2 | Committees and subcommittee and related correspondence, 1930-1940, 1951 |
| BOX 2 | House Committee on Elections of President and Vice President, 1929-1945 |
| BOX 2 | Minutes of Executive Committee and other committees, 1926-1951 (2 folders) |
| BOX 2 | Official endorsements by organizations, 1928-1945 |
| BOX 2 | Organization of Citizen's Joint Committee, 1937-1938 |

Old Records, 1926-1945

Container

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| BOX 2 | Supporting and interesting organizations, 1929-1960 (2 folders) |
| BOX 3-6 | Political, 1955-1961 Draft legislation, weekly status reports and memoranda, files on state legislatures and lobbying files for each state. Arranged alphabetically by type of material. |
| BOX 3 | General |
| BOX 3 | <i>Congressional Record</i> , remarks of E. K. Morris and Jennings Randolph, 1959 |
| BOX 3 | H.J.R. 529 and statement of Elwood F. Davis, 1959-1960 (2 folders) |
| BOX 3 | List of states which have ratified, in order of ratification, 1961 |
| BOX 3 | Public Law 376, 84th Congress, 1955 |
| BOX 3 | S.J.R. 39 and final amendment as passed by the Congress, 1960 (2 folders) |
| BOX 3 | S.J.R. 138, hearing before Judiciary Committee, 1959 |
| BOX 3 | S.J.R. 138, statement of Elwood F. Davis, 1959 |
| BOX 3 | State governments, legislative sessions, and related matter, 1961 |
| BOX 3 | Weekly status reports and memo to committee members, 1961 |
| BOX 4 | State files, 1961 |
| BOX 4 | Alabama-Massachusetts |
| BOX 5 | Michigan-Ohio |
| BOX 6 | Oklahoma-Wyoming |
| BOX 7 | Publicity, 1960-1961 Press releases, printed matter, information files. Arranged alphabetically by type of material or subject matter. |
| BOX 7 | District of Columbia, general information, 1961 |
| BOX 7 | National file, 1960-1961 |
| BOX 7 | Political party file, 1960-1961 |
| BOX 7 | Press releases, 1960-1961 (3 folders) |
| BOX 7 | Ratification of Twenty-third Amendment, 1961 (2 folders) |