

# GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

## OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

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## Attorney General Racine Welcomes Fellow State Attorneys General with Full-Throated Call for District Autonomy

*AG Brings Greetings at National Association of Attorneys General Meeting in D.C.*

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – Yesterday, Attorney General Karl A. Racine welcomed his peers from around the nation to the National Association of Attorneys General (NAAG) Winter Meeting with a call for more self-determination and full voting rights for the District.

**“The District of Columbia deserves full autonomy,”** Attorney General Racine said. **“While our residents pay federal taxes, serve on federal juries, and fight in our nation’s wars, we are denied a voting voice on Capitol Hill. It’s simply unconscionable that the 660,000 residents of this city do not enjoy the rights to self-determination and full democracy that the residents of your states do.”**

Mr. Racine specifically mentioned the fate of Initiative 71 – the referendum passed by a large majority of District voters last year legalizing the possession, growth and use of small amounts of marijuana for adults under certain circumstances – as an object lesson in the District’s lack of autonomy. Opponents of marijuana legalization in Congress successfully attached a provision to a congressional budget deal approved late last year that effectively prevents the District, for the rest of the federal fiscal year, from enacting further regulations enabling the use and sale of marijuana in the District.

**“Because of the intrusion by less than a handful of members of Congress into the clear expression of the will of the citizens of the District of Columbia, the District is unable for the time being to enact the kind of marijuana regulations that would make it easier to ensure the health and safety of our residents,”** Attorney General Racine said. **“This is undemocratic, unfair, and unwise.”**

The Attorney General also thanked [DC Vote](#) and its Executive Director, Kimberly Perry, for spearheading the decades-old fight for more autonomy, full democracy and statehood for the District. **“Kim Perry and DC Vote have done, and continue to do, outstanding work on this issue for our residents, and every District resident who supports self-determination owes them thanks,”** he said.

Mr. Racine's remarks came during the opening plenary session of NAAG's Winter Meeting, which is held in the District. The meeting features attorneys general and their staff members from around the nation and from American territories. It will conclude February 25.

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