

The Free and Equal D.C. series addresses privileges, rights and benefits universally enjoyed not only by the citizens of State and local jurisdictions, but also by the four territories, under Federal principles of local control that govern the United States. Among the most important are the right to enact local budget, civil and criminal laws free from Federal interference. This bill's fraternal twin, the most important in the Free and Equal D.C. series, H.R. 1629, the District of Columbia Budget Autonomy Act of 2005, sponsored by Government Reform Committee Chairman TOM DAVIS and I, was introduced last year as the first bill of the series. The Senate passed the bill in 2003, and my goal is to achieve passage by both Houses this session.

Because the period of congressional review involves only legislative days, when Congress is in session, not calendar days, D.C. laws typically do not become law for months, not days. A required hold on all D.C. bills, forces the City Council to pass most legislation using a cumbersome and complicated process in which bills are passed concurrently on an emergency, temporary, and permanent basis to ensure that the operations of the large and rapidly changing city continue. The Legislative Autonomy bill would eliminate the need for the District to engage in this Byzantine process that often requires a two-thirds super majority even for ordinary legislation.

This second bill in the Free and Equal D.C. series would eliminate the congressional review period for civil and criminal District acts of 30 days and 60 days respectively. I have introduced today's legislative autonomy bill before, but today's bill is particularly timely because of substantial changes in congressional approach and practices in responding to Council-passed law. In effect, Congress has eliminated the review or layover period. My bill would do no more than align D.C. City Council practices with the approaches Congress uses today.

Moreover, although control of the Congress changed in 1994 for the first time in 40 years, no resolution of disapproval has been heard in committee or used on the floor of either House. Instead of the cumbersome formal filing of bills that require processing in the House and the Senate, both use other more efficient processes, particularly appropriations or attachments to other bills. My bill would eliminate a formal review system that has died of old age and non-use. Congress has walked away from layover review and should allow the city to do the same.

Today's bill, of course, does not prevent review of District laws by Congress. Under Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution, the House Government Reform Committee and the Senate Government Affairs Committee could scrutinize every piece of legislation passed by the City Council, if desired, and could change or strike legislation under the plenary constitutional authority over the District. However, today Congress prefers more rapid approaches. My bill merely eliminates the automatic hold placed on local legislation and eliminates the need for the City Council to use a Byzantine emergency and temporary process to keep the District functioning under law.

Since the Home Rule Act became effective in 1974, of over 2000 legislative acts that have been passed by the Council and signed into law by the Mayor, only three resolutions to disapprove a D.C. bill have been enacted, and

two involved a distinct Federal interest; only 43 acts have been challenged by a congressional disapproval resolution. Federal law to correct for a Federal interest, of course, would be appropriate for any jurisdiction, but placing a hold on 2000 bills has not only proved unnecessary, but has meant untold costs in money, staff and time to the District and the Congress.

We continually urge the District government to pursue greater efficiency and savings. Congress must now do its part to promote greater efficiency both here and in the District by streamlining its own cumbersome, redundant, and obsolescent review processes. Eliminating the hold on D.C. legislation would not only save scarce D.C. taxpayer revenue; my bill would benefit the city's bond rating, which is effected by the shadow of congressional review that delays the certainty of finality to District legislation. At the same time, Congress would give up none of its plenary power because the Congress may intervene into any District matter at any time.

Thus, the limited legislative autonomy granted in this bill would allow the District to realize the greater measure of meaningful self-government and Home Rule it deserves and has more than earned in the 32 years since the Home Rule Act became effective. This goal can be achieved not only without prejudice to congressional authority. A congressional practice for many years now that has meant savings to Congress should now be reciprocated to the City Council as well. I urge my colleagues to pass this important measure.

ON THE INTRODUCTION OF HER
BILL SUPPORTING A SALVA-
DORAN-AMERICAN DAY

HON. HILDA L. SOLIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 9, 2006

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce a bill supporting the goals and ideals of a Salvadoran-American Day (El Dia del Salvadoreño) in recognition of all Salvadoran-Americans for their hard work, dedication and contribution to the stability and well-being of the United States.

Forty years of internal political turmoil forced hundreds of thousands of individuals from the Republic of El Salvador to flee the country and seek peace and security in the United States. Currently, there are over 900,000 Salvadoran-Americans living in the United States, with the majority of them living in California, the Washington, DC Metropolitan Area and New York. In the Los Angeles metropolitan area alone, there are roughly 400,000 Salvadoran-Americans.

In California, the state with the largest population of Salvadoran Americans, El Dia del Salvadoreño is widely celebrated among the Latino community. This celebration of Salvadoran traditions dates back to 1525, when on August 6 the city of Villa De San Salvador was founded. August 6 also marks the date when Salvadorans around the United States celebrate the "Fiestas Agostinas" (August Holidays.) This celebration pays homage to the cultural festivities of El Salvador while adapting itself to the lives of Salvadorans in the United States. Celebrated by Salvadoran-

Americans in California and throughout our country, Salvadoran-American Day has grown in significance over the years.

Let us not forget that our Nation was built by people from many nations and cultures whose lives and work have contributed to the greatness of our Nation. Likewise, we must recognize the efforts of Salvadoran-Americans for their cultural and economic contributions to the United States and support the ideals of a Salvadoran-American Day.

IN HONOR AND REMEMBRANCE OF
LENA CARDOSO COSTA

HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 9, 2006

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with my colleague Congressman DENNIS CARDOZA, to share the obituary of Lena Cardoso Costa a loving mother to our dear friend and colleague, Congressman JIM COSTA. She was a loving mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother who meant a great deal to a great many people. Knowing of the important bond between JIM COSTA and his mother Lena, we express our deepest sympathies for his loss.

Mr. Speaker, please join us in honoring and remembering the life of Lena Cardoso Costa.

OBITUARY TO LENA CARDOSO COSTA

Surrounded by loved ones Lena Cardoso Costa completed her long journey of 90 years during which she contributed generously to the lives of her family and her community. As a member of what has been described as "America's Greatest Generation", she knew first hand the hard-scrabble days of the Great Depression, the uncertainty of living in a nation at war and the joy that comes from seeing the success of her children and family.

Born in Corcoran, California on August 20, 1915 to Joseph and Georgina Cardoso, Portuguese emigrants from the Azore Islands, Lena Cardoso was raised in Stratford, California along with her 5 brothers and 2 sisters. Her parents came to America to establish for themselves and their children a better life. During Lena's childhood her family endured very difficult economic times, but they persevered to realize the American Dream. The values of Lena's parents, hard work and dedication to family, were passed on to their children.

On October 11, 1936, Lena Cardoso married Manuel Costa and joined the large extended family of John C. Costa Sr. Along with his brother and his wife, John and Mary Costa, Lena and Manuel established a dairy and farming business that moved permanently to the Kearney Park area in 1942.

During the 1950's, 1960's and 1970's Lena was deeply involved in her community, cooking at the Kearney Elementary School and serving on the school's district's Board of Trustees. Because she had to quit school at the 9th grade to help her family, she placed an extraordinary importance on education for her children and grandchildren. As a matter of fact, Lena decided for her own satisfaction in 1985, at age 70, to go back to school and earned her General Education Degree.

In addition, Lena was appointed to the Fresno County Social Services Commission upon which she served through the late 60's and early 70's. She was active in the Fresno County Cabrillo Club for over 60 years in support of the club's numerous civic and charitable events and for years represented