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This Week In Congress Radio Address: Hawaiian Statehood Approved by Congress,
1959 March 13

Speaker: Senator J. Allen Frear

Transcribed by: David Cardillo

[00:00]

Announcer: The Week in Congress, recorded on March 13th, 1959.

Mr. Kelly: From Washington, DC, United States Senator J. Allen Frear reports again to the people of Delaware on current congressional affairs. Ladies and gentlemen, Senator Frear.

Senator Frear: Thank you, Mr. Kelly. In the space of two brief periods last week, the Eighty-Sixth Congress added another and most significant chapter to the history of the United States of America. The action came when the Senate, by a vote of seventy-six to fifteen, voted to admit the territory of Hawai'i into the Union as our fiftieth state. Approval by the Senate on Wednesday was followed in less than twenty-four hours by a similarly large vote in the House of Representatives. The reaction that followed this important decision by the Congress was immediate and widespread. From far across the Pacific in the islands of Hawai'i, the population voiced its great pleasure and, in fact, extensive enthusiasm upon the realization that at long last, the territory would become a part of the United States itself. Proponents of Hawai'ian statehood have been working towards this goal for forty years or more. However, the members of Congress over this period had seen fit to delay the admittance pending study and investigation of conditions political, social, and economic on these rather distant Pacific islands. Obviously, by the two resounding votes in both the House and Senate, the members of Congress and the American people are satisfied that Hawai'i meets the test of statehood. Like our forty-ninth state Alaska, which comes into the Union this year, Hawai'i, as our fiftieth state, will, I hope, add stature to our great Federal Union. It used to be that the Hawai'ian islands, as well as Alaska, were remote and distant places, accessible only after many days and weeks of travel. Now, in this remarkable age of flight, both of these new states are almost on our very doorstep. A few, brief hours separate them not only from our western part of the United States, but from the east coast as well. Thus, in seeing our national flag change twice within the span of a year through the addition of two new states, we, all of us, as Americans, that is, are demonstrating both to ourselves and especially to the rest of the world our desire to share with the peoples of our two greatest territories the advantages and opportunities which accompany the responsibilities of statehood. And so as the statehood issue for Alaska and Hawai'i now becomes a part of twentieth century American history, I should like to take this occasion to

express my personal appreciation to the hundreds and hundreds of Delawareans who have written or spoken to me about the statehood issue over the past ten and a half years. While a number of Delawareans disagreed with the proponents of statehood, especially in earlier years, it has been evident from more recent correspondence that opinions on the matter have changed, and thus, I have the conviction that we of the first state are proud and happy to welcome the citizens of our fiftieth state as partners in this great republic.

Mr. Kelly:

Thank you, Senator Frear. From the nation's capital, you have heard United States Senator J. Allen Frear in his regular report to the people of Delaware on current congressional affairs. Senator Frear will be heard again next week at this same time, speaking from the Senate Office Building in Washington.

[End 04:55]