

Dear Friend,

235 years ago, our Founders adopted the Declaration of Independence. Today, we are citizens of the oldest, freest and most prosperous republic in the world. This Independence Day, let us celebrate the 56 men who had the courage to declare to the world "that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." Let us also remember those who have ensured these words live on today. The members of our Armed Forces who have fought battles around the world to ensure that no foreign enemy could threaten our 'unalienable rights' deserve our unending gratitude. As do countless Americans in every generation of our nation's history that have stood vigilantly in their everyday lives against any attacks on and infringements of the rights laid out for every American in the Declaration of Independence.

Ronald Reagan once called the Declaration of Independence "a document destined to be as immortal as any work of man can be." And he was right. This document, crafted and signed in a time of great turmoil, has been a guidepost not just to our country and people, but to people around the world. The principle of a nation whose government is empowered by the consent of the governed has inspired democracies in every corner of the globe.

As we join our family and friends in the comfort of barbeques and fireworks, we do so knowing that many are also burdened by worry and uncertainty. There is no question that our nation is facing tremendous challenges. We have a sluggish economy, high gas prices and unsustainable levels of debt and deficits. Yet, I have great confidence in the resilience of America and that of the American people. This is not the first time our nation has faced challenges, and this is not the first time we will rise up to meet them.

Because of the unique conviction, commitment and optimism of the American people, we have always come out of the tough times stronger than ever, and I know we will do it again this time. One reason for our resiliency is our faith in individual liberty. For over two centuries, in good times and bad, the democratic principles that have guided our nation have not been compromised. The ability of Americans to rise up and make their voices heard has continued to show the world the benefits of living in a free democratic republic. And our nation will continue to be a symbol of hope to men and women around the world for many generations to come.

I am proud to be an American, and am proud that we remain a nation that inspires, but we must also remember that our freedoms are not free. We owe our continued way of life to the many courageous men and women, from the Revolutionary War to the wars of today, who have and continue to serve and sacrifice to protect our liberty. On this July Fourth, I hope we all take the time to reflect on the modern-day patriots that are serving, on their families and on the fundamental rights that make us quintessentially American.

Sincerely,

Congressman Kevin McCarthy