



A message from **THE PRESIDENT**

2025 FOURTH OF JULY

Political philosophers are quick to point out that America was, before anything else, an idea: that of self-governance. No kings were needed to order the life of a nation; the citizens themselves would administer a system in which freedom, justice, and prosperity were available to all.

That idea is more often spoken of than actually implemented, but it remains the shining goal of the country and has since July 4, 1776, when the Second Continental Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence and transformed a British colony into the United States of America.

249 years later, we can look back at a tumultuous past. The American Experiment has been under attack since its founding. Today we find ourselves wondering and worrying – as Abraham Lincoln said in his Gettysburg Address – “whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure.”

This is a grim, uncertain age, and it would be foolish not to admit it. But it would also be foolish to abandon our belief in the ideals of our founders. They, too, lived in a troubled era; they, too, wrestled with questions of how the nation should be defined and who does the defining. The result of their struggle is what we celebrate on July 4.

Their task is now ours. What is America to be? How best to protect and preserve the animating principles of democracy? How to live up to what is best in us? How to keep hoping and not succumb to despair?

That is the challenge we have been given.

We are equal to it.

Happy Fourth of July!

With hope for the future,

Daisy Cocco De Filippis, Ph.D.
President

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