



# Happy Birthday America!

Jul 02, 2012

On July 4, 1776, Congress approved the United States Declaration of Independence. The United Colonies had officially proclaimed their independence from Britain, hereafter to be called the United States of America.

The names of 56 men representing each of the 13 United States endorsed this Declaration of Independence, and thousands more fought for the idea—the vision of America.

With this vision of freedom came the need to protect it — and so came the blessing of a military controlled by civilians that would ensure that our god given rights are never taken from us.

So on this day, we are not only celebrating the birth of America and our independence, we also celebrate the courage, bravery, and defiance of tyranny that today's men and women of the armed forces display in order to protect the core values of the United States of America.

Since 1776 many have challenged America and our values — even today, exactly 236 years later our vision of freedom meets opposition. With freedom comes the responsibility to defend it. It's safe to say that defending one's country is the highest form of public service. Our service members have proven time and time again that they stand ready to defend what is ours.

And as we celebrate our independence, we thank all patriots of the past who have defended it and given us hope, not only for our future, but for all future generations. We ask that as you celebrate with your families, friends, and communities today, you remember all of the American patriots, from the countryside of the New England states to the beaches of Normandy, from the jungles of Vietnam, to the streets of Kandahar. They are the ones who have preserved freedom, and who have given us reason to defend freedom for all future generations.

Thank you to all of our men and women of the armed forces, whose fight has and will continue to lead others to a better way of life. You have truly given us all reason to celebrate our past, our present, our future—our independence.

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