



A Birthday Letter to America:

This year, our nation will turn 250. Two and a half centuries of self-governance, hard work, reinvention, and relentless forward motion. For 250 years, American business has been an engine of opportunity. It is through businesses that ideas become jobs, and jobs become livelihoods, and livelihoods become communities. The businesses that line main streets don't just provide a service. They provide employment, tax revenue and a daily reminder that risk and hard work can be rewarded.

Here in Lansing, we are marking our own milestone. The Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce turns 125 this year. Founded in 1901, when this region was still finding its economic footing, the Chamber was built on a simple and durable conviction that when businesses work together with purpose, with trust, and with a shared vision in the community everyone rises.

American enterprise is the belief that people have the freedom to choose their own businesses, compete in open markets and succeed through hard work and individual initiatives. The entrepreneur who opens a storefront on Michigan Avenue. The manufacturer whose workers sends kids to college. The startup founder betting everything on an idea not yet proven. The family business now in its third generation. These are the American enterprise stories.

Across this country, there are more than 4,000 Chambers of Commerce. We are among the most trusted institutions in America, not because we are powerful, but because we are present. In every city, in every region, the Chamber shows up. When a business needs a connection, the Chamber makes it. When a policy threatens growth, the Chamber speaks. When a community needs a rally point, the Chamber convenes it. The Chamber is, at its best, the place where commerce meets community and where both are made stronger for the connection.

That has been true here in the Lansing region for 125 years. We have been through economic booms and downturns. We have welcomed new industries from life sciences, technology, financial services and healthcare while honoring the manufacturing heritage that built our region. We have advocated fiercely for pro-growth policy, connected thousands of businesses with resources and relationships, and invested in the talent and infrastructure that makes this region competitive.





We have done all of that because our members have done it with us. The Chamber is not the building on Michigan Avenue. The Chamber is every leader who has served, every business that has opened its doors and said I am a part of this community, and I am committed to its success.

As we look to the next 250 years of this country and the next chapter for our region, we do so with clear eyes and confidence. The challenges ahead are real. Workforce development, infrastructure, housing, fiscal sustainability, the pace of technological change these are not small problems. But they are the kind of problems that American enterprise is built to solve.

We believe in Lansing. We believe in Michigan. We believe in our Country. We believe in the enduring power of free enterprise, and the daily work of building something worth passing on. That belief is the confidence earned of 125 years of showing up, speaking up, and delivering for our business community.

So, as we Celebrate America's 250th birthday, business leaders across the country are taking a moment to share a simple idea with their employees, members and communities: a Birthday Letter to America. We are proud to be part of the Together For 250 coalition, proud to carry the Chamber tradition forward, and proud to stand alongside every business, every entrepreneur, and every working family in this region who get up every day and make it happen.

That, after all, is what we do.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Tim Daman'.

Tim Daman
President & CEO
Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce

