



Dear United States of America,

Happy birthday! On a day like this, we celebrate one of your most beautiful ideals: that anyone, starting right where they are, can come together with their neighbors and build something better. From where I sit, that promise comes alive every day.

Good Business Colorado Association was founded by business owners who didn't see themselves reflected in the business associations around them. They were entrepreneurs who believed they could turn a profit, treat their workers well, and leave the place better than they found it, and they were tired of being told those goals were in tension. So they did the most American thing imaginable: they organized. We became a Colorado business association rooted in values-based leadership, and today we represent nearly 500 businesses across 32 counties.

The most American thing about us is that we're a coalition that refuses to fit neatly into anyone's box. We have tech founders and ranchers, restaurateurs and manufacturers, urban and rural members, people who vote differently from one another sitting at the same table. What holds us together isn't ideology. It's a shared conviction that a business has obligations to its people, its community, and its place. The belief, that enterprise and conscience belong together, is about as American as it gets.

If there's one civic principle we'd protect, it's the right to organize and be heard. Our organization depends on the idea that ordinary people, in our case small business owners, can show up at the Capitol, tell their own story, and actually shape the laws that govern their lives. That's governance working the way it's supposed to.

And here's what gives me hope on your birthday: our members keep choosing engagement over cynicism. It would be easy for them to have succumbed to the overwhelm of the dramatic pressures they've been facing. Instead, they keep showing up, for each other, for their workers, for policy fights that won't be resolved overnight. People who haven't given up on shared effort are the best reason for optimism I know.

So happy birthday, USA. We'll keep doing our part.

With gratitude,

Doni Clemons

Executive Director, GBC and GBCA