



– VIRTUAL TIME CAPSULE –

A Birthday Letter to America

National Media Quote Book & Guide

What Is Business Saying to America on Its 250th Birthday?

As America approaches its 250th birthday, over 100 companies, chambers of commerce, trade associations, and business organizations from across the country have come together to answer a simple question:

What would you say to America on its 250th birthday?

The result is a remarkable collection of Birthday Letters to America— independent reflections written by business and community leaders in their own words. Some celebrate entrepreneurship and innovation. Others reflect on service, civic engagement, local communities, economic opportunity, and the values that continue to shape the American story.

Together, these letters provide a unique snapshot of how the American business community is reflecting on our nation's past, present, and future as we approach this historic milestone.

The letters will be preserved in a Virtual Time Capsule — a digital archive of what American business chose to say at this milestone, accessible for generations to come. Business for America hopes the collection will be revisited at future anniversaries as a firsthand record of American business thought at 250.

By the Numbers

- Over 130 participating organizations
- More than 75 chambers of commerce
- Current participants from 43 states and Washington D.C.
- Includes companies, chambers of commerce, business organizations, and trade associations
- Features voices from industries including manufacturing, consumer products, printing, tourism, agriculture, public affairs, technology, healthcare, financial services, and more

Why This Matters

At a time when much of the national conversation focuses on division and disagreement, these letters offer something different.

Written independently and without a common script, they reveal recurring themes that transcend geography, industry, and political affiliation:

- Opportunity
- Entrepreneurship
- Community
- Innovation
- Service
- Civic participation
- Freedom
- Responsibility
- Optimism
- The importance of investing in future generations

Together, these letters demonstrate how business leaders across America are using this milestone to reflect on the role they play in strengthening communities, creating opportunity, and helping shape the next chapter of the American story.

How Journalists Can Use This Resource

This document contains selected excerpts from Birthday Letters to America submitted by participating organizations.

Journalists are encouraged to:

- Review featured quotes and themes
 - Browse the full letters through the accompanying links
 - Identify local and regional story angles
 - Request introductions to participating organizations through Business for America
 - Use the collection as a source of perspectives tied to America's 250th anniversary
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For interview requests, media assets, campaign information, participant introductions, or additional background materials, please contact Chip directly.

Featured Quotes

America Outdoors Association

"What divides us can feel enormous until you are standing beside someone watching the sunrise over a canyon. Perspective can shrink the distance. That is not only an image of recreation; it is democracy in profile... Americans agree on more than we tell ourselves we do. Not always on policy or politics, but on something more fundamental: the strong and deeply personal connection we share to this vast, varied landscape."

Aaron Lieberman, Executive Director, America Outdoors Association

Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives

"The first chamber in the U.S. was founded in 1768, eight years before the Declaration of Independence. Since then, chambers have helped communities grow, strengthened local economies, supported entrepreneurs, championed infrastructure, and brought leaders together to address their community's most pressing challenges... In an era when trust in nearly every American institution has fallen, local chambers have earned public trust. We do not take that lightly. Trust is not a reward for past performance, but a responsibility to continue providing the civic leadership our communities and country need."

Sheree Anne Kelly, President & CEO, Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives (ACCE)

BIPAC

"It would not be possible without the freedom, opportunity and ability to contribute to something greater than ourselves and the belief that each generation can help build a future better than the one it inherited. ... Looking back over our 250 years, Americans have demonstrated extraordinary resilience, entrepreneurship, and civic spirit. From solo entrepreneurs to global enterprises, from local communities to national movements, progress has been driven by people willing to invest in the future and work together to expand opportunities not just for themselves, but for others."

Tim Riordan, President & CEO, BIPAC

Caldwell Chamber of Commerce

"America's story has never belonged only to the largest cities or biggest corporations. It has always belonged to the people willing to take a chance, solve a problem, and build something that lasts. ... Choose Community. The future of our nation is built in neighborhoods, downtowns, industrial parks, farms, and small business corridors across this country."

Travis Palmer, President & CEO, Caldwell Chamber of Commerce

California Association for Local Economic Development

"Economic developers are optimists, problem solvers, people connectors, and more. ... It is an honor to lead an association that serves professionals who wake up every morning with the intent to help others access opportunity, to help others access the American Dream."

Gurbax Sahota, President & CEO, California Association for Local Economic Development (CALED)

CAMEO Network

"America has never been one story. It has always been millions of them—told in storefronts and workshops, on small farms and in market stalls, by people who bet everything on a dream. ... As we celebrate America's 250th birthday, we honor the entrepreneurs who built this nation and the dreamers who will write its next chapter."

CAMEO Network

Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce

"Chicago grew from a frontier outpost into one of the world's great economic centers because generations of entrepreneurs, workers, inventors, and business leaders chose to build something bigger than themselves. Their ambition helped shape not only our region, but the nation itself. ... Across the Chicago region, businesses of every size are investing in people, creating jobs and opportunity, solving problems, and helping our communities prosper."

Jack Lavin, President & CEO, Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce

Chief Executives for Corporate Purpose

"The next chapter of America's story will be defined by the choices we make today. Businesses have long been drivers of opportunity and progress, and now is a moment to lead with purpose, strengthen trust, and contribute to a more resilient and inclusive society."

Daryl Brewster, CEO, Chief Executives for Corporate Purpose

Chamber of Commerce Hawaii

"Aloha means love, peace, and compassion. It means showing up for each other. ... As a country and as a state, we've been through hard times together. But every single time, our community showed up. Our neighbors. Our business owners. Members of our Uniformed and Armed Forces. That kind of showing up, that's aloha. And we believe with everything we have, that's America too."

Sherry Menor, President & CEO, Chamber of Commerce Hawaii

Chillicothe Ross Chamber of Commerce

"When a group of local business leaders formed the Board of Trade in 1888, they were acting on the same instinct that drove Ohio's founders to gather here decades earlier: the conviction that when people organize around a shared purpose, they can accomplish things none of them could do alone. ... Thank you for the messy, imperfect, extraordinary project of building a nation where people are free to dream, to risk, to fail, and to try again."

Mike Throne, President & CEO, Chillicothe Ross Chamber of Commerce (Ohio)

Cobb County Chamber

"America, you have never been a finished product. You are a living agreement — between neighbors, between business owners and their communities, between those who came before and those still arriving. What makes you remarkable isn't perfection. It's the persistence. The willingness to keep showing up and building anyway. ... When we hire locally, invest in our neighbors, and show up for our communities not just as employers but as citizens, we help renew the trust that a democracy runs on."

Sharon Mason, President & CEO, The Cobb Chamber of Commerce

Consumer Brands Association

"My clearest memories of home are the simple ones. They're a particular cereal box on the breakfast table, the soap my mother kept by the kitchen sink, or the brand of coffee that meant the day had officially begun. ... The food, beverage, household and personal care brands Americans reach for have simply been there, dependable and familiar, woven into the fabric of daily life in this country. ... Standing behind every product on the shelf are the people who made it possible: the farmer and the supplier, the scientist and the engineer, the worker on the line and the driver who gets products where they need to go."

Melissa Hockstad, President & CEO, Consumer Brands Association

CSS Distribution Group

"I have not simply heard about the American Dream. I have lived it. ... America never promised me success. What it promised was opportunity—the freedom to dream, to work, to fail, to learn, and ultimately to succeed."

Dan Withrow, CEO, CSS Distribution Group

Emmis Corporation

"What America gave to our family and so many other families was a haven. A haven where their hopes and dreams could be realized. Where their families could find sanctuary. Where their children could be educated. Where they could practice the religion they followed with safety and security. Where they could achieve economic success and rise to whatever level their talents would merit. ... We know that America is not perfect, but we also know that Americans have constantly worked to follow our better angels and make this a society worth being emulated all over the world."

Jeff Smulyan, CEO & Founder, Emmis Corporation

Fayette Chamber of Commerce

"The American story is still being written by those who dare to dream, believe in the strength of community, and remain committed to shaping a brighter future. ... Hope is not a feeling; it is a belief that shapes outcomes. We remain one nation, bound not by perfection but by purpose, and that, more than anything, is worth celebrating."

Leonardo McClarty, President & CEO, Fayette Chamber of Commerce

Fox Cities Chamber

"The story of America is not simply one of independence or achievement. It is a story of possibility. It is the belief that progress happens when individuals, businesses, and communities come together to solve problems, embrace innovation, and create opportunities for others. ... We believe America's best days will be shaped not by any one person or organization, but by millions of people who choose to invest in their communities, support one another, and work toward a stronger future."

Becky Bartoszek, President & CEO, Fox Cities Chamber

Frederick County Chamber of Commerce

"The monumental task of building a stronger country has never belonged to one person or institution. It has always belonged to all of us. For generations, this is what chambers of commerce all over the country have represented. We don't just stand for business advocacy, but the belief that communities thrive when individuals and organizations come together around a shared purpose. ... The American story is still being written. Its next chapter will be shaped by the same qualities that have carried us so far: hard work, civic engagement, entrepreneurship, service, and a willingness to build something larger than ourselves."

Rick Weldon, President & CEO, Frederick County Chamber of Commerce

Fresno Chamber of Commerce

"At the Fresno Chamber of Commerce, we see those ideals come to life every day. We see them in the small business owner opening their doors before sunrise, the entrepreneur taking a chance on a new idea, the employee striving to provide for their family, and the community leaders who dedicate their time to making our region stronger."

Scott Miller, President & CEO, Fresno Chamber of Commerce

Good Business Colorado Association

"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. ... Our members keep choosing engagement over cynicism."

Doni Clemons, Executive Director, Good Business Colorado and GBCA

Grand Rapids Chamber

"Fifty years ago, as the nation celebrated its 200th anniversary, Grand Rapids faced a pivotal moment. Business and civic leaders looked at what their city had become and refused to accept it. Volunteers and retired police officers stepped up, and what followed in the decades since has been an incredible rejuvenation. ... Grand Rapids and America have always been places where people roll up their sleeves and build something better. That optimism, ingenuity, and stubborn refusal to accept decline remain our greatest strengths."

Rick Baker, President & CEO, Grand Rapids Chamber

Greater Bakersfield Chamber

"Kern County may be one place on the map, but what we produce, grow, innovate, and build serves millions. From the fields that help feed the world to the energy that powers homes and businesses, our local industries remind us that America's greatest strength has always been found in communities willing to do extraordinary work with extraordinary purpose."

Janelle Capra, President & CEO, Greater Bakersfield Chamber

Greater Fayetteville Chamber

"We are honored to live alongside the heroes who serve at Fort Bragg, the largest, and one of the most important military installations in the world. To our soldiers, airmen, veterans, and military families: thank you. Your commitment to defending freedom and protecting our nation allows communities like ours to thrive in peace and opportunity. ... America's story has never been one of perfection, but it has always been one of perseverance. Generation after generation has stepped forward to meet challenges, expand opportunities, and build a stronger future for those who follow."

Nat Robertson, President & CEO, Greater Fayetteville Chamber

Greater Myrtle Beach Collaborative

"Every day, residents across the Grand Strand launch businesses, create jobs, mentor future leaders, volunteer their time and collaborate to address challenges no single person can solve alone. ... The prosperity we enjoy today did not happen by accident. It is the result of generations of people choosing to invest their time, talent and resources in something larger than themselves. ... The best way to honor the first 250 years is to keep building the next."

Matt Pivarnik, CEO, Greater Myrtle Beach Collaborative

Jimmy Gray, President, Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce

Greater Oklahoma City Chamber

"The growth and momentum our region is experiencing today are the result of decades of intentional investment, strong leadership and a shared commitment to building a community positioned for long-term success. ... Our community has demonstrated what is possible when people work together around a shared vision. ... The decisions communities make today will help shape America's next chapter."

Christy Gillenwater, President & CEO, Greater Oklahoma City Chamber

Greater Omaha Chamber

"Seventy-eight years after the Declaration of Independence, Omaha was founded on July 4, 1854. That shared date has always felt fitting. Because Omaha's story is, in many ways, America's story. ... Omaha was built by people who believed tomorrow could be better than today. They came here to work hard, to make their way, to raise their children, and to belong to something larger than themselves. That is not just Omaha's story. That is America's story."

Heath Mello, President & CEO, Greater Omaha Chamber

Greater Rochester Chamber

"We have seen Frederick Douglass and Susan B. Anthony fight for and champion efforts to advance civil liberties for marginalized groups. ... We are working hard today, alongside so many other regions throughout the nation, to ensure that all members of our community are experiencing the equality and liberty that have been promised to them. ... We are proud to convene and lead conversations that ensure that 'all men are created equal' is not just a phrase – but a lived reality for all."

Robert Duffy, President & CEO, Greater Rochester Chamber

The Greater San Antonio Chamber

"We proudly support the brave service members, veterans, and military families who call Military City, USA® home. Their service and sacrifice remind us that freedom requires vigilance, commitment, and a willingness to place the greater good above oneself. ... Whether by casting a ballot, serving on a board or commission, volunteering in the community, advocating for sound public policy, supporting local businesses, or joining organizations that strengthen our civic fabric, each of us has a role to play in shaping our future. ... As we say at The Greater San Antonio Chamber, we are GREATER TOGETHER."

Jeff Webster, President & CEO, The Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce

Greater Wilmington Chamber

"Wilmington's chapter began before the nation itself. Founded in 1739 on the banks of the Cape Fear River, our city grew as a colonial port where merchants, shipbuilders, and tradesmen came to build something of their own. ... The founders of this nation, and the founders of this city, invested in things they would never see finished. We owe the next 250 years the same. ... Our state toast celebrates the land of the long leaf pine, 'where the weak grow strong and the strong grow great.' That single line captures the work of a chamber of commerce, and the promise of America itself."

Natalie English, President & CEO, Greater Wilmington Chamber of Commerce

Gwinnett Chamber

"When [Button] Gwinnett signed the Declaration of Independence in 1776, there was no guarantee of success. The colonies were challenging the most powerful empire in the world, and failure could have cost him everything. Yet he chose to act anyway. That willingness to move forward amid uncertainty remains just as relevant today. ... Every day, entrepreneurs launch businesses without knowing the outcome. Employers invest in new markets and emerging technologies. Community leaders take on challenges without the benefit of guarantees. Progress has always depended on individuals willing to step forward before the path ahead is fully visible."

Nick Masino, President & CEO, Gwinnett Chamber

The Hampton Roads Chamber

"From maritime commerce and military support to advanced manufacturing, healthcare, technology, and small business entrepreneurship, Hampton Roads has long played a vital role in America's economic and national security success. ... As we honor America's 250th Anniversary and celebrate our own 225 years of service, we look ahead with optimism, confident that the same spirit of innovation, determination, and opportunity that built our nation and our Chamber will continue to guide us for generations to come."

Bryan K. Stephens, President & CEO, Hampton Roads Chamber

Home Grown Fuels

"America was built by adventurers and risk takers, farmers, tradespeople, and small business owners. When problems arose, innovators and entrepreneurs began problem-solving. Today, we follow in their footsteps by creating a solution to remediate toxic chemicals using the healing remedies found in the forests of Maine's Great North Woods."

Lee Kahn, CEO, Home Grown Fuels

Hilton Head Island-Bluffton Chamber of Commerce

"Along these shores, generations have pursued freedom, opportunity, and the chance to build a better future. ... America happens when neighbors become volunteers, volunteers become leaders, and leaders inspire the next generation to serve. ... For 250 years, that spirit has strengthened communities, expanded opportunity, and renewed the American promise from one generation to the next."

Bill Miles, President & CEO, Hilton Head Island-Bluffton Chamber of Commerce

Johnson Consulting Services

"The legacies of leaders such as Thaddeus Stevens and Lydia Hamilton Smith show us that meaningful progress often requires courage, conviction, and a willingness to challenge the status quo. ... Strong communities are built on trust. They are at their best when people stay informed, engage in respectful dialogue, participate in civic life, and work together to solve challenges. ... The American story has always been told through local voices, and every community has an important role to play in shaping what comes next."

Jill J. Johnson, President & Founder, Johnson Consulting Services

Kalispell Chamber of Commerce & Discover Kalispell MT

“Here in Kalispell, we have much to be proud of—and much still to do. We are growing, evolving, and planning for the future while working to protect the qualities and values that make this place so special. Our challenge and opportunity is to carry forward the best of who we are: our independence, our generosity, our entrepreneurial spirit, our respect for place, and our willingness to work together for the good of the whole community. We call this 'Kalispell Kind.’”

Lorraine Clarno, President & CEO, Kalispell Chamber of Commerce & Discover Kalispell MT

Lancaster Chamber

"The legacies of leaders such as Thaddeus Stevens and Lydia Hamilton Smith show us that meaningful progress often requires courage, conviction, and a willingness to challenge the status quo. ... Strong communities are built on trust. They are at their best when people stay informed, engage in respectful dialogue, participate in civic life, and work together to solve challenges. ... The American story has always been told through local voices, and every community has an important role to play in shaping what comes next.”

Heather Valudes, President & CEO, Lancaster Chamber

Lansing Regional Chamber 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. ... The Chamber is, at its best, the place where commerce meets community and where both are made stronger for the connection. 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."

Tim Daman, President & CEO, Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce

Little Rock Regional Chamber

"As we look out at the Arkansas River from the Little Rock Regional Chamber building, we are reminded of how far our region has come, from a small landmark on the riverbank to a thriving center of commerce, innovation, and opportunity. ... Communities do not prosper without people willing to invest their time, talent, and resources into building something greater than themselves."

Jay Chesshir, President & CEO, Little Rock Regional Chamber

Mesa Chamber of Commerce

"Every day, we see the American story come to life. We see it in the small business owner opening their doors before sunrise. We see it in the entrepreneur turning an idea into a thriving enterprise. We see it in educators preparing for the next generation, public servants strengthening our community, and neighbors helping neighbors without hesitation. ... We see it in Mesa itself, founded by pioneers who transformed desert land into a thriving community through determination and ingenuity."

Sally Harrison, President & CEO, Mesa Chamber of Commerce

Michigan West Coast Chamber of Commerce

"As we look toward America's next 250 years, I believe our future will be shaped not by a few headline moments, but by millions of everyday actions. A business owner taking a chance on a new idea. A mentor investing in a young professional. A volunteer showing up to serve. A community leader bringing people together around a shared goal. ... Recently, our Chamber adopted a bold ten-year goal: to create one million moments of positive impact. While that goal is local, the idea is universal. Strong communities are built one positive interaction, one innovative idea, one act of leadership, and one moment of service at a time."

Jodie Owczarski, President & CEO, Michigan West Coast Chamber of Commerce

Microenterprise Collaborative of Inland Southern California

"America's story has always been written in small beginnings. It lives in the home-based baker turning family recipes into income, the mechanic who opens a two-bay shop on a busy corner, the street vendor who greets the same customers every morning, and the childcare provider watching over the next generation while their parents work. ... These everyday enterprises may never make national headlines, but they stitch together the local economies and social ties that keep our democracy grounded in real relationships."

Pamela Deans, Executive Director, Microenterprise Collaborative of
Inland Southern California

Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce

"French colonists established Mobile in 1702, more than seven decades before the Declaration of Independence was signed. ... What that long history teaches is this: America is not a completed work. It never has been. It is a continuous act of construction, carried forward by communities, businesses and individuals who decide, in each generation, that the future is worth building. ... Two hundred and fifty years is a long time. It is also, in the life of a nation with this much still ahead of it, just the beginning."

Bradley Byrne, President & CEO, Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce

National Association of Wholesalers-Distributors

"Distributors operate behind the scenes, serving as the backbone of our supply chain and the connective tissue of our economy. ... They are entrepreneurs, they work hard, they are patriotic, they have grit and determination, they are innovative, they care deeply about their customers and employees and they take great pride in the important role they play in helping millions of people live their American dream."

Eric Hoplin, President & CEO, National Association of Wholesalers-Distributors (NAW)

Nebraska Chamber of Commerce & Industry

"From the beginning, the American promise has been rooted in the belief that the future is not something that simply happens to us. It is something we build. We build through work, invention, risk, service, and the willingness of each generation to leave something stronger for the next. ... What you do every day matters. You develop people. You create opportunity. You turn ideas into action. You help make the future real."

Matt Williams, Interim President & CEO, Nebraska Chamber of Commerce & Industry

New Mexico Chamber of Commerce Foundation

"From the beginning, the American promise has been rooted in the belief that the future is not something that simply happens to us. It is something we build. We build through work, invention, risk, service, and the willingness of each generation to leave something stronger for the next. ... What you do every day matters. You develop people. You create opportunity. You turn ideas into action. You help make the future real."

Robert Leming, President & CEO, New Mexico Chamber of Commerce Foundation

Norman Chamber of Commerce

"Settlers who arrived during the Land Run of 1889 came seeking possibility and a chance to build a future. They opened stores, established banks, launched businesses, and helped transform a prairie settlement into the vibrant community we know today. ... Across 250 years of history, the nation's progress has been built town by town, business by business, and entrepreneur by entrepreneur."

Scott Martin, President & CEO, Norman Chamber of Commerce

Odessa Chamber of Commerce

"Here in West Texas, that spirit is reflected in generations of ranching families and entrepreneurs, teachers, first responders, and the energy workers who have made the Permian Basin the highest-producing oil region in the world. It is this unmatched work ethic and grit that keeps our community strong."

Renee H. Earles, President & CEO, Odessa Chamber of Commerce

Page Society

"A nation's true character—like that of any institution—is defined far more by what it does than what it says. ... The work is unfinished, but I remain hopeful that together we can continue moving closer to the ideals that inspired our nation's founding."

Rochelle Ford, CEO, Page Society

Park City Chamber

"We have built a country where the freedom to pursue an idea, start a business, build a life, and make a difference can be embraced by people of all backgrounds. In Park City, those possibilities have brought prosperity, purpose, and lives well-lived in a spirit we call Mountainkind. ... But it is our people who live out a simple yet profound, deeply American value: tomorrow can be better than today and working together, we can accomplish extraordinary things."

Jennifer Wesselhoff, CEO, Park City Chamber

Principled Business

"We see it in founders taking risks to solve meaningful problems. In investors deploying capital with discipline and long-term vision. In employees who bring integrity and excellence to their work regardless of recognition. ... The next chapter of this story will not be written by institutions alone. It will be written by individuals who choose to lead with principle, build with purpose, and contribute to something larger than themselves."

Alexander McCobin, Founder & CEO, Principled Business

PRINTING United Alliance

"Long before digital communication connected the world, print carried ideas across cities, states, and continents. It informed citizens, educated communities, fueled commerce, supported democracy, and helped generations of Americans share their stories. Print has always been more than ink on paper, it is how information becomes understanding, how ideas become action, and how voices become part of the national conversation. ... And for those of us in print, we remain proud to help tell America's story, one page, one package, one sign, one publication, and one innovation at a time."

Ford Bowers, CEO, PRINTING United Alliance

Public Affairs Council

"America's progress has never depended on unanimity. It has depended on participation. ... The work of these practitioners is rooted in a principle as old as the nation itself: the right to petition government and participate in civic life. ... Freedom to speak. Freedom to remain silent. Freedom to agree. Freedom to disagree. And, when necessary, the freedom to agree to disagree. ... The next chapter of the American story will be shaped not by unanimous agreement, but by the willingness of citizens to engage, participate, and contribute."

Nneka Chiazor, President & CEO, Public Affairs Council

RJA Associates

"The greatest danger facing you is something else entirely: the growing belief that your problems are somebody else's responsibility. No republic can survive when its citizens lose faith in their own ability to govern themselves. ... Your future will not be determined by Washington alone. It will be determined by whether you, the people, are still willing to sacrifice, participate, build, innovate, raise families, serve your communities, and tell the truth even when it is inconvenient."

Rick Hinds, Managing Partner, RJA Associates LLC

Sacramento Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce

"We've watched generations of dreamers become entrepreneurs, neighbors become partners, and challenges become opportunities. That's Sacramento's story, but it's also America's. ... The next chapter of America's story will require the same spirit that has carried us this far: working together, embracing new ideas, and creating opportunity for the next generation."

Robert W. Heidt Jr., President & CEO, Sacramento Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce

Sagac Public Affairs

"Our American experiment began with a profound and audacious premise: that free individuals, granted the liberty to innovate and the opportunity to compete, could build the most extraordinary nation on earth. ... The true strength of this country has never resided in its federal institutions or the halls of government. It lives among entrepreneurs willing to take calculated risks, employers creating jobs, and communities solving problems through local action."

Trey Richardson, Managing Partner, Sagac Public Affairs

South Tampa Chamber

"One anniversary marks the birth of a nation; the other, the founding of a local chamber. Both reflect a shared belief: people working together can build something stronger, more prosperous, and more enduring than any one individual alone. ... As we celebrate America's 250th birthday and our Centennial year, we are inspired not only by our past, but by our future. The next century for both our nation and our Chamber will be shaped by innovation, entrepreneurship, civic engagement, and a shared commitment to expanding opportunity."

Kelly Flannery, President & CEO, South Tampa Chamber

Southern Ohio Chamber Alliance

"Several years ago, I met a successful businessman in Dallas and asked why he devoted so much of his time and resources to community causes. His answer was simple: 'I don't want to be a net taker.' ... At its best, America is a nation of net contributors. Veterans who serve. Teachers who inspire. Entrepreneurs who create opportunity. Volunteers who strengthen neighborhoods. Civic leaders who dedicate themselves to causes larger than themselves, and to a posterity they have not yet met. ... Let us be contributors rather than consumers. Let us build stronger communities rather than merely criticize them. Let us continue the unfinished work of forming a more perfect Union."

Matt Appenzeller, President & CEO, Southern Ohio Chamber Alliance

Springfield Chamber Oregon

"Every day, we see entrepreneurs opening their doors before sunrise, employers investing in the next generation, educators preparing tomorrow's workforce, nonprofit leaders strengthening lives, public servants stewarding our communities, and volunteers giving their time without expecting recognition. Most will never make headlines. Yet together, they accomplish extraordinary things. ... Every generation builds upon the work of the last, leaving a stronger foundation for those who follow."

Vonnie Mikkelsen, President & CEO, Springfield Chamber Oregon

State Business Executives

"As we celebrate our nation's 250th birthday, let me make a strong and clear case for business and the role we play. Not an apologetic one, and not a defensive one. A proud one. Because as we mark 250 years of American enterprise, the executives on our Board—and across this country—have earned the right to stand up and say plainly: we built this. ... The story of American enterprise is not one story. It is built company by company, decision by decision, leader by leader — by people like you."

Jeff Wasden, President & CEO, State Business Executives

Sullivan & LeShane Letter

"I hope we rediscover something that seems increasingly rare today: the ability to disagree without being disagreeable. ... America has never been strongest when everyone agreed. It has been strongest when people with differing opinions came together around a common purpose and a shared commitment to a better future."

Paddi LeShane, President & CEO, Sullivan & LeShane Public Relations

Toledo Regional Chamber of Commerce

"One of America's greatest achievements is not a single invention, industry, or institution—it is a system that empowers ordinary people to do extraordinary things. ... The next chapter of the American story will be written by the people building businesses, developing talent, advancing technology, strengthening communities, and creating opportunities for others to succeed."

Wendy Gramza, President & CEO, Toledo Regional Chamber of Commerce

Top of Virginia Regional Chamber

"Long before the founding of our nation, a young George Washington traveled through the Shenandoah Valley as a surveyor and military leader. Today, the historic sites connected to his time here stand as enduring reminders of the vision, perseverance, and leadership that helped shape the United States while linking our region to the earliest chapters of America's story. Together, we can honor those who came before us, support the businesses and communities that strengthen our region today, and inspire future generations to continue writing the next chapter of the American story."

Cynthia Schneider, CEO, Top of Virginia Regional Chamber

Tulsa Regional Chamber

"As a state, we endured the hardships of the Dust Bowl, rebuilt after devastating tornadoes and carried forward with strength and compassion following the tragedy of the Murrah Building bombing. Each challenge tested us, but each one also revealed the character that defines the 'Oklahoma Way.' ... Tulsa was built not only by entrepreneurs and workers but also by philanthropists, civic leaders and neighbors who understood that progress is strongest when it is shared. That spirit of generosity continues to guide us today."

Mike Neal, President & CEO, Tulsa Regional Chamber

Vail Valley Partnership

"Pragmatic Patriotism is a philosophy rooted less in ideology and more in results. It's optimistic without being naive, proud without being fragile, and serious about governing in a way that works. ... Our challenges, after all, are not Republican or Democratic challenges; they are community challenges. ... At 250, America doesn't need to reinvent itself. It simply needs to recommit to what has always worked: optimism, fairness, strength, and the practical courage to govern well."

Chris Romer, President & CEO, Vail Valley Partnership

West Virginia Chamber

"The challenges before us are real, but so are the opportunities. West Virginia is helping power our nation's energy future, advancing manufacturing, strengthening infrastructure and preparing the next generation of leaders. None of this happens by accident. It happens because people choose to invest, innovate and believe in what's possible."

Doreen Canon, General Manager, Whitewater Challengers

Whitewater Challengers

"It's not about changing people's minds, and it's not about agreeing on common ground. It's about learning to disagree better and rekindling conversations that begin with respect, rely on empathy, and end with deeper understanding. ... Regardless of our differences, we are all in the same boat together, and we'll always do better by pulling together than by pulling apart."

Doreen Canon, General Manager, Whitewater Challengers

Wichita Chamber of Commerce

"We see it in the small business owner who opens the doors before sunrise. We see it in the manufacturer training the next generation. We see it in the teacher preparing students for a world that will look different than the one we now know. We see it in the volunteer giving time to make a neighborhood stronger. We see it in the young professional choosing to build a life here. We see it in the military family making Wichita home. ... America is built in places like Wichita, through hard work, ambition and community."

Brecken Morel, Interim President & CEO, Wichita Chamber of Commerce

Women in Print Alliance

"It's been said that 'well-behaved women rarely make history.' ... America's progress over the past 250 years has been built by trailblazers who expanded what was possible for those who followed. ... We demonstrate that spirit by helping the next generation of women in print explore their potential and chart their own pathways to success."

Lisbeth Lyons Black, Director, Women in Print Alliance

About A Birthday Letter to America

A Birthday Letter to America is part of Together for 250, a national, nonpartisan initiative led by Business for America.

The initiative invites companies, chambers of commerce, trade associations, and business organizations to reflect on America's 250th anniversary through a simple but meaningful act: writing a letter to employees, members, customers, or their communities sharing what the milestone means to them and their hopes for the future.

Together for 250 helps organizations celebrate America's semiquincentennial in ways that are positive, practical, community-focused, and nonpartisan.

About Business for America

Business for America (BFA) is a national business membership organization that helps businesses strengthen civic culture, reduce political risk, and support a more functional democracy through practical, cross-partisan engagement.