



July 2, 2026

A Letter to America on the Occasion of 250 Years

Dear America,

As you celebrate 250 years of independence, we pause to reflect on the promise that has defined your story since the beginning: that through freedom, hard work, innovation and opportunity, people can build a better future for themselves, their families and their communities.

From the perspective of Las Vegas, that promise is alive and well.

This year, as America marks its semi-quincentennial, the Vegas Chamber proudly celebrates **115 years of serving Southern Nevada's business community**. Our histories are intertwined. Both are stories of people who believed that tomorrow could be better than today and who were willing to work together to make it so.

Long before Las Vegas became known around the world, this land was home to Indigenous peoples whose legacy continues to shape our community today. Their enduring presence reminds us that every chapter of America's story builds upon those who came before.

In the early years of the twentieth century, Las Vegas was a modest railroad stop in the desert, a place of possibility but an uncertain future. Then, in 1911, visionary business and civic leaders came together through the Chamber to chart a new course. They understood that economic diversification and tourism could create opportunity and prosperity for generations to come.

Their vision proved transformational.

What began as a small desert community has evolved into a global city and one of the world's most recognized and exciting destinations. Millions of visitors arrive here each year, experiencing firsthand the innovation, hospitality, creativity, and entrepreneurial spirit that define both Las Vegas and America. In many ways, Las Vegas has become a window through which the world experiences the American dream.

Yet our greatest strength is not found in our iconic skyline, our resorts, or our international reputation. It is found in our people.

Las Vegas remains a place where someone with a dream can build a business, create jobs, support a family, and contribute to a thriving community. It is a place where entrepreneurs take risks, where innovation is rewarded, and where opportunity continues to attract talent and ambition from every corner of the nation and around the world.

We are a community that believes in supporting one another. We champion entrepreneurship. We celebrate job creation. We understand that a strong business community creates a stronger region for everyone. For 115 years, the Vegas Chamber has worked alongside business leaders, educators, nonprofit organizations, and public officials to advance policies and opportunities that help our community prosper.

As America enters its next 250 years, we are optimistic about what lies ahead.

We envision a future where entrepreneurship continues to drive innovation, where businesses create pathways to prosperity, where communities grow stronger through collaboration, and where every individual has the opportunity to pursue success. We believe Las Vegas will continue serving as a gateway between the United States and the world, a place that showcases the creativity, resilience, and determination that have always defined our nation.

For 250 years, America has been a story still being written. It is a story of visionaries and builders, dreamers and doers, communities that unite in moments of challenge and opportunity alike.

From our corner of the Mojave Desert, we are proud to contribute to that story.

Happy 250th birthday, America. May we honor the lessons of the past, embrace the opportunities of the present, and work together to build an even stronger future for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Mary Beth Sewald
President and CEO

Vegas Chamber
Celebrating 115 Years of Business Leadership and Community Impact

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