

Message on the 250th Anniversary of the First Convening of the Second Continental Congress

May 10, 2025

On this day 250 years ago, a mighty assembly of statesmen, thinkers, lawyers, and patriots gathered at Independence Hall in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to formally convene a revolutionary body to guide America to its independence. On May 10, 1775, our Nation's forefathers convened the Second Continental Congress, a historic body that would go on to adopt the Declaration of Independence, the grandest and most important political document ever put to pen.

Following the famous "shot heard 'round the world" at the Battles of Lexington and Concord on April 19, 1775—the first major armed hostilities of the Revolutionary War, in which the British Army attempted to seize American military supplies and arrest American leaders—it became clear to the patriots that their conflict with the British Crown had escalated beyond mere disagreement. Despite the colonists' tireless efforts on behalf of peace, war was all but certain. In the wake of the Boston Massacre, the imposition of the Intolerable Acts, and the lasting injustice of taxation without representation, Americans had formed the First Continental Congress in the fall of 1774 to seek redress for their grievances. By the spring of 1775, following the lives taken at Lexington and Concord, a new Congress was convened, and America's righteous crusade for independence was formally underway.

Comprised of true American titans like John and Samuel Adams, Thomas Jefferson, Roger Sherman, Benjamin Franklin, John Hancock, James Madison, John Jay, and George Washington—whom Congress later appointed as the Commander in Chief of the Continental Army—the Second Continental Congress was made up of some of the boldest, fiercest, and most visionary men ever to walk the face of the Earth. This remarkable body would go on to preside over the Revolutionary War, establish critical international alliances, and maintain unity among the Thirteen Colonies as America secured its independence and ultimately emerged as a new nation.

The Second Continental Congress set in motion our independence, our venerated political traditions, and the birth of the greatest Republic ever created. As we commemorate 250 years since its first convening, we recommit to the ideals of our Nation's founding. We summon the courage of our Founding Fathers. Above all, as we approach 250 years of glorious independence, we proudly invoke the spirit of 1776 to build a proud, hopeful, and radiant future.

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