

Message on the Birthday of John Jay
December 12, 2025

Today our Nation celebrates the 280th birthday of John Jay, the first Chief Justice of the United States, a titan of American sovereignty, and a key architect of our laws, our foreign policy, and our glorious American independence.

Born in New York City and raised with the timeless values of faith and civic duty, John Jay answered the call to public service at a moment when America was still fighting for its right to define itself. As President of the Second Continental Congress, he played a central role in America's struggle for independence, and after our victory in the Revolutionary War, Jay helped to negotiate the Treaty of Paris, freeing us from tyranny and ensuring that American sovereignty was recognized all around the world.

Jay was also a central figure in molding the American constitutional order. In 1787 and 1788, he took up his pen to author five essays of the "Federalist Papers," articulating the eternal principles of justice that have defined our federal laws, our system of government, and our foreign policy for nearly 250 years, including his belief in a centralized Federal Government to protect the American people from the influence of nations overseas. As the first Chief Justice appointed to the Supreme Court, he set in motion a judicial framework grounded in integrity, fairness, and the immortal promise of equal justice under the law. And as one of our Nation's first great diplomats, the Treaty of Amity, Commerce, and Navigation that he negotiated with Great Britain kept America out of the French Revolutionary Wars and ensured a decade of peace for our fledgling nation.

He carried this same conviction from the national stage and into State governance as the second Governor of New York, where he oversaw the construction of roads and canals that supported the State's early growth, laying a foundation that would shape major developments and lead to New York's legendary skyline and resilient character in the generations that followed, a legacy I was proud to build upon.

As we prepare to celebrate 250 glorious years of American independence next year, we recognize John Jay's lasting contributions to our Government, our traditions, and our national character. My administration remains committed to preserving the principles he cherished so deeply, including that peace is preserved through strength, that our Nation's foreign policy must always put America first, and that a nation without the rule of law ceases to be a nation at all. Today, in John Jay's honor, we reaffirm our commitment to liberty and justice for all and to carrying his extraordinary vision forward for years to come.

Happy birthday, John Jay.

Categories: Letters and Messages : John Jay, message on birthday.

Subjects: America's 250th birthday celebration; John Jay, birthday.

DCPD Number: DCPD202501190.