

Message on the Birthday of Thomas Jefferson

April 13, 2026

Today we celebrate the birthday of Thomas Jefferson, a true American visionary, the principal author of the Declaration of Independence, and one of the greatest champions of liberty the world has ever known.

From a young age, Jefferson possessed an extraordinary intellect and a deep love of learning. His remarkable mind led him to attend the College of William and Mary, where he studied a rigorous curriculum of mathematics, politics, and literature, developing the ideas that would go on to forever define the American experiment. After his legal apprenticeship with George Wythe, a prominent Virginian lawyer, Jefferson would quickly cement himself as a well-respected legal scholar. His career of public service began in 1769 when he was elected to serve in the Virginia House of Burgesses where he emerged as an outspoken advocate for the cause of Colonial independence. His brilliant writings and patriotic devotion earned him a nomination to represent Virginia in the Second Continental Congress, where he drafted the Declaration of Independence, the transcendent charter of human liberty, which was adopted by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776, and forever altered the course of American history.

Thomas Jefferson's influence became even more significant in the years that followed. A steadfast champion for religious freedom and individual liberties, Jefferson penned the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom, which laid the foundation for the First Amendment. He then went on to serve as Governor of Virginia, Minister to France, Secretary of State, Vice President, and ultimately the third President of the United States, where he secured the historic Louisiana Purchase, which doubled the size of the United States and unlocked vast frontiers for exploration and opportunity.

After his Presidency, Jefferson retired to his Monticello estate in Virginia, where he founded the University of Virginia to ensure that future generations were equipped with the knowledge necessary to preserve freedom. He remained a powerful voice for liberty until his death on July 4, 1826—the 50th anniversary of our independence—a poetic end to a legendary life of service and devotion to our Nation.

On what would have been his 283d birthday, we honor Thomas Jefferson's enduring contributions to securing the precious rights that we cherish so deeply. In his honor, we pledge to ensure that America remains a shining beacon of freedom and righteousness, where liberty is cherished, the rule of law prevails, and our sovereignty is secured.

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