



SOAR: Statement of American Renewal

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America has reached its two hundred and fiftieth year with profound unease about its future.

Across political traditions, Americans express dissatisfaction with the direction of their country. They have less confidence in institutions and in one another, and many worry that the nation may become more divided, harder to govern, and less able to fulfill the ideals it inherited.

Yet many Americans have not lost hope. They know that something has gone wrong, but have not given up on what their country might yet become.

They have not reached the end of their story. They have reached a crossroads: one path leads away from self-government and toward autocratic rule; the other calls for a renewed commitment to the American experiment.

To understand what renewal requires, we must return to the promise Americans first declared in 1776: that legitimate government does not rest on inherited authority, royal privilege, or the will of a crown. They asserted that people have rights that exist before government, that political authority comes from the consent of the governed, and that government exists to ensure the liberty and well-being of the people.

The country that emerged from that declaration did not fully live by those ideals. Liberty was proclaimed but slavery endured. Equality was declared while women, Indigenous peoples, Black Americans, laborers, immigrants, religious minorities, and many others were denied an equal voice, protection, or standing. The language of universal rights was written in a society that often denied those rights to much of its population.

Yet the failure to honor a principle does not invalidate the principle. It leaves the work undone. After two hundred and fifty years, that work belongs to all Americans.

At this defining moment in history, the commitment to self-government is renewed because America's founding ideals remain worthy of fulfillment. This renewal does not discard the principles proclaimed in 1776. It states more clearly what generations of Americans have struggled to establish ever since:

That all people are created equal in human dignity; that liberty belongs to no race, faith, gender, class, ancestry, political faction, or form of family; and that government is legitimate only when it protects these principles fairly and remains accountable to the people it serves.

This statement is offered to every person willing to accept equal citizenship, constitutional government, mutual liberty, peaceful political opposition, and equal administration of the law.

This statement does not ask Americans to abandon their faith, their traditions, their families, their communities, their prosperity, their cultural inheritance, their political convictions, or legitimate differences. It only requires that none of these be used to make one group superior to another.

This generation has the opportunity to preserve and strengthen the constitutional inheritance built over two hundred and fifty years, rather than surrender it to those who would place power above principle and autocratic rule above self-government.

I. All People Are Created Equal

We hold these truths to be self-evident: *all people are created equal in dignity and moral worth. No difference of race, gender, faith, ancestry, birthplace, wealth, identity, disability, family origin, or social position gives one person a greater claim to humanity than another.*

Every person has a right to life, liberty, security, justice, belonging, and the pursuit of happiness.

Equality is not sameness. People differ in ability, belief, achievement, ambition, tradition, circumstance, temperament, and the lives they choose to lead.

A free society should allow those differences to flourish, but differences in talent, wealth, religion, ancestry, gender, political belief, or circumstance must never become differences in human worth, legal protection, political rights, or rightful belonging.

II. We the People Means All the People

A nation does not preserve its founding ideals merely by repeating their words, displaying their symbols, or praising those who first wrote them, but only by applying them.

“We the People” cannot mean only those who share our race, faith, ancestry, politics, family, region, language, or way of life. It cannot mean only those we recognize as friends while excluding those we have been taught to view as enemies.

The words have meaning only when the rights and responsibilities of citizenship extend equally to all citizens, and government recognizes the human dignity of every person.

America was built across generations by people of many origins. Some came seeking opportunity. Some fled persecution. Some were brought here by force. Many were already here.

Indigenous peoples and nations existed long before the United States was founded. They established cultures, governments, trade networks, and communities of their own. Many later faced broken treaties, forced removal, loss of land, and efforts to erase their cultures. Yet Indigenous peoples endured and continue to shape the American story through their traditions, leadership, service, knowledge, and care for their communities and homelands.

Black Americans did not merely experience American history. Their labor, sacrifice, service, creativity, intellect, resistance, culture, citizenship, and leadership helped build the country while the country often denied them the freedom it declared.

Immigrants and their descendants have likewise built communities, businesses, institutions, farms, industries, universities, technologies, art, culture, and families that have become inseparable from the American story.

Acknowledging these truths diminishes no one.

III. No Person Is Expendable

A free society must reject the idea that some people should be viewed as inferior, expendable, alien, or undeserving of protection.

Equal dignity requires us to protect people. Equal protection is a fundamental human right.

It does not require us to protect ideologies that deny others the same dignity.

Racial supremacy, religious domination, political violence, ethnic cleansing, hereditary superiority, and authoritarian obedience are not right because their supporters genuinely believe in them.

No group may claim the language of liberty while denying liberty to those it considers unworthy. A right that exists only for a privileged minority is not a right.

No person may claim for themselves a freedom, protection, authority, or dignity that they would deny to another person under the same law.

IV. We Reject the Politics of Tribes

Human beings naturally form communities.

We cherish families, faiths, neighborhoods, traditions, cultures, regions, professions, political movements, and nations.

Belonging is not the enemy of democracy, but when belonging requires an enemy that is when divisions begin.

Americans must not be divided into tribes whose freedom, prosperity, safety, or dignity are thought to depend on the defeat or humiliation of other Americans.

No citizen strengthens America by treating fellow citizens as strangers within it.

A republic cannot endure when loyalty to a faction becomes stronger than loyalty to truth, justice, constitutional government, and country.

Citizenship therefore demands more than defending our own interests. It requires integrity to tell the truth when falsehood benefits our side.

Citizenship also requires maturity to govern fear rather than surrender to it. It requires courage to admit error, and it requires responsibility for our choices as well as a commitment to defend the rights of people whose identities, lives, and beliefs are different from our own.

V. Strength, Character, and Responsibility

Strength is not demonstrated by dominating the vulnerable, silencing those who are different, demanding obedience, or refusing accountability.

It is proved by self-control, adherence to principles, courage, honesty, compassion, accountability for one's actions, and the willingness to protect the rights of others even in the absence of personal gain.

These virtues belong to no gender, race, religion, class, or political tradition, and where they are practiced, relationships become stronger, vulnerable people are better protected, communities become more resilient, and liberty becomes more secure.

VI. Families and Human Belonging

Families take many forms and are joined by birth, marriage, adoption, kinship, commitment, partnership, or care.

The traditional household has an honored place in American life. However, it holds no exclusive claim to what constitutes legitimate love, responsibility, sacrifice, or belonging.

A family's value is not determined by adhering to a single arrangement. It is demonstrated through care, safety, faithfulness, accountability, mutual respect, and the dignity given to every person within it.

Partnership is built on equality, not obedience. Raising a child is a duty of care, not a right of ownership. No adult can claim ownership of another by appealing to tradition.

Tradition deserves respect when it passes on wisdom, continuity, care, and belonging.

VII. Freedom of Conscience and Faith

Freedom of conscience protects Christians, Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, people of every other faith, and those with none.

No religion should have to depend on political power to survive. Religious freedom cannot survive when the government gets to decide which faith is American enough.

No religion is honored when its symbols are used to justify conduct inconsistent with its own moral teachings.

Faith can inspire public service, compassion, humility, justice, courage, and sacrifice. It may not give anyone better citizenship or political control over those who think differently.

Freedom of religion is also freedom from being coerced into religion.

VIII. Government Belongs to the People

The purpose of government is to serve the people, not to enrich the rulers, reward their supporters, punish their opponents, or protect the powerful from accountability.

Public office is a trust, not a property.

No president equals the nation. No political party speaks for all people. No leader is above the Constitution, and no election gives an officeholder unlimited power.

Political power must be temporary, limited, and accountable. It must be able to transfer peacefully from one leader or party to another.

A government does not become legitimate simply because a ruler, corporation, political party, or group of experts claims it could govern more efficiently. Free people disagree, so democracy can be slow, difficult, and frustrating. That is no reason to turn citizens into subjects.

The people may make mistakes. That does not give anyone else the right to own their future.

One generation cannot permanently surrender democratic self-government on behalf of future generations.

When they fail, democratic institutions should be repaired, not abandoned. Corruption requires accountability. Incompetence requires better leadership. Abuse of power calls for stronger limits on power.

The American people did not reject a king only to have another autocratic leader take his place.

A weakening republic does not give anyone the right to destroy constitutional self-government in order to save it.

IX. A Vote Is a Public Trust

A ballot is not an oath of allegiance to a party, movement, ideology, or leader. It is a public trust.

Citizens entrust public authority to individuals who are expected to use it responsibly through elections for a limited period of time. There is no political party that has a permanent claim on anyone's vote.

Citizens should judge leaders by their respect for truth, constitutional limits, equal justice, competence, peaceful government, public responsibility, and the welfare of the people they serve.

Citizens can remove their support through lawful democratic processes when elected officials stop working for the public interest, put themselves above the law, prioritize private interests over public duty, or require personal loyalty over loyalty to the Constitution.

This is one of the cornerstones on which constitutional self-government rests.

X. Prosperity Without Oligarchy

A free society should promote enterprise, invention, investment, useful work, entrepreneurship, and honest prosperity.

Business owners, workers, investors, innovators, and corporations can all make great contributions to society. Success should be respected.

But wealth does not create greater citizenship. A corporation is not a sovereign, and a fortune does not give anyone a greater right to rule.

Economic power must not buy political immunity, special access to government, or the power to write laws for private gain alone. Markets should reward enterprise, but not allow the strongest players to control the rules everyone else must follow.

The goal is not to punish success. It is to prevent great wealth from becoming great political power.

A nation is not a corporation, and citizens are not employees of the state. People should not be treated as assets whose value depends on wealth, productivity, obedience, or usefulness to those in power.

Commercial success deserves respect. It does not grant political sovereignty.

XI. Liberty Must Include the Opportunity to Flourish

The pursuit of happiness is more than the pursuit of wealth.

It includes opportunities for learning, creating, contributing, establishing connection, serving others, discovering purpose, and becoming more fully who we can become.

No society can ensure that everyone has equal talents, good fortune, or ability to achieve. However, it should not allow poverty, discrimination, lack of education, preventable illness, or inherited privilege to waste human potential.

Human beings are motivated by more than money. Curiosity motivates us. Pride in good work motivates us. Mastery, recognition, love, duty, community, challenge, and the satisfaction of being useful all motivate us.

Wealth can reward contribution, but it does not define contribution.

A healthy society should value the teacher, caregiver, volunteer, artist, scientist, craftsman, worker, parent, and neighbor. If their contribution does not produce great wealth, they must be valued nevertheless.

A society becomes stronger when it allows more people to have the freedom, dignity, education, security, and opportunity to develop their abilities and contribute what they can.

We should aim for a society in which people live together, not just next to each other. We should help one another to flourish.

XII. Patriotism Requires Commitment, Not Spectacle

Patriotism is not measured by how loudly one praises the nation, how many flags one displays, or how reverently one invokes its founding documents. It is measured by whether we live according to the principles for which they stand.

The flag cannot transform hatred into patriotism. Quoting the Constitution cannot justify supremacy. Commitment to the Constitution means living by its principles, not merely quoting its words. Extending liberty and legal protection to those with whom we disagree is the clearest way to demonstrate our commitment to the Constitution.

When one faction claims words of freedom as its own, they become tools of dominance.

American liberty is indivisible; denying it to some ultimately threatens the liberty of all.

XIII. Protecting the Principles of This Statement

Nothing in this statement may be used to justify racial supremacy, religious or political domination, oppression, unequal citizenship, authoritarian government, or permanent rule by any leader, party, corporation, class, or elite.

Its principles must always be understood together: equal dignity for every person, equal rights, constitutional self-government, peaceful political competition, and shared citizenship.

No one can claim that greater wealth, intelligence, expertise, technology, efficiency, or moral certainty gives them a natural right to rule others without their consent.

Americans may disagree about the size of government, taxes, regulation, public services, immigration, or how political power should be organized at the municipal, state, or federal level. Those disagreements are part of democracy.

What cannot be accepted is the permanent transfer of power away from the people themselves.

When the meaning of this statement is challenged, ask four questions:

- *Does this interpretation protect equal human dignity?*
- *Could the same rule be applied fairly to people outside one's own group?*
- *Does it place anyone above the law?*
- *Does it preserve the peaceful transfer of political power?*

If the answer to any of these questions is no, then the interpretation does not fit this statement.

This statement welcomes disagreement in good faith. It does not support the belief that America should belong more fully to some people than to others.

XIV. The Unfinished American Revolution

In 1776, Americans declared that they would no longer be subjects of a crown.

The revolution they began remains unfinished. It remains incomplete when citizens surrender their judgment to a leader, when wealth buys government, when access to liberty is conditional upon identity, when political opponents become enemies to be dehumanized, when truth is made subordinate to a party, or when human potential is wasted because some lives are considered less worthy than others.

The task before this and future generations is not to repeat the first revolution. It is to fulfill its promise:

To build a republic that can tolerate disagreement without hatred, reward achievement without permitting oligarchy, protect faith without imposing it, preserve wisdom without preserving domination, honor differences while preserving unity, defend itself without becoming the oppressor, and extend liberty equally.

The unfinished revolution requires that Americans continuously reject any form of autocratic government.

XV. Beyond America

No nation is made greater by believing itself superior to all others or by claiming exceptional status for itself. Love of country does not require belief in national perfection.

The United States should meet the world as one nation among many, capable of learning as well as leading.

A nation cannot credibly demand rules for the world while claiming exemptions for itself.

Humility strengthens a country by helping it recognize its mistakes, learn from others, and earn respect through its conduct rather than demand it through its power.

Yet the principles declared here do not belong exclusively to one nation. Human dignity does not stop at a border. Neither does the human desire for freedom, belonging, purpose, knowledge, creativity, love, security, and growth.

We affirm these principles first within the United States because no nation can credibly proclaim liberty to the world while withholding it from its own people.

Our hope is that humanity will increasingly extend the same principles across peoples and nations: to preserve cultural differences without making enemies of them, pursue knowledge without abandoning wisdom, exercise power without domination, and join human strength for peace, discovery, creation, and the common good.

The future of humanity will not be measured only by the wealth we accumulate, the technologies we invent, the territory we control, or the distances we travel.

It will be measured by what kind of civilization we become.

A civilization worthy of reaching other worlds will be one that helps every human being reach their full potential wherever they live.

Our Renewal

We affirm:

That the American promise remains unfinished but not exhausted.

That government by the people can endure only when it remains government for the people.

That we inherit both the achievements and the failures of those who came before us, but we inherit no obligation to repeat their mistakes.

That we choose instead to uphold what was best in their vision, correct the injustices that kept it from being fully realized, and enlarge the inheritance for future generations.

That the American experiment is not complete, and that we renew our commitment to a republic where every person has equal dignity, every citizen has an equal claim to government, power is held accountable to law, prosperity supports democracy rather than dictates it, and freedom offers not merely the right to exist, but the opportunity to flourish.

We do not undertake this renewal because we believe progress is inevitable. It is not.

Democracies can fail. Rights can be lost. Institutions can decay. Wealth can become power, fear can become hatred, citizens can become subjects, and generations can surrender what earlier generations struggled to secure.

But decline is not destiny, and division need not be permanent.

The failures of self-government are not proof that human beings are incapable of governing themselves.

Our republic will not be renewed by hope alone. Renewal depends on people willing to accept responsibility for making it possible.

That commitment is demonstrated when citizens remain true to principle, tell the truth when convenience tempts them to lie, accept responsibility rather than nurse grievance, serve rather than dominate, and place the future above the temporary rewards of power.

America has reached its two hundred and fiftieth year not knowing what the future holds.

Perhaps America's best years lie behind it. Yet it can choose today to build better ones ahead.

Therefore, with humility toward those who came before us, responsibility toward those who share this nation with us, and hope for generations we will never meet, we pledge ourselves again to the unfinished work of liberty and to the rejection of every attempt to turn citizens into subjects.

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