

*“Nothing is politically right
which is morally wrong.”*

– Daniel O’Connell



*“Free and fair discussion will ever be
found the firmest friend of truth.”*

– George Campbell

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Senator Stouffer’s Thoughts on Freedom

The loud and colorful explosions, the magnificent display in the night sky, the smile and the look in our children’s eyes – these are the thoughts of most during the Fourth of July. People tend to forget about their differences and come together for the parades, concerts, barbecues and fireworks. As we gather do we remember what makes the Fourth of July significant?

When was the last time you read the Declaration of Independence? When was the last time you thought about the document that symbolizes the freedom of our country? When was the last time you raised your voice in protest against the government? When was the last time you thought about the thousands fighting for freedom?

The Declaration of Independence states: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness—That to secure these rights Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.”

I am reminded of our country's freedom by the recent ruling by the Supreme Court on the Ten Commandments or the controversy around the flying of the Confederate Flag. Regardless of whether you and I agree, it only takes one voice, and we have a government in place that will make sure your rights and your freedoms are protected.

I am reminded every time I step into a voting booth that this is my right. If I do not like who is elected, I get to vote again or I can start publicly speaking out against the elected official. When our founding fathers seceded from England, they were not given those same rights, and today many people around the world do not get to share in these same privileges.

The middle paragraphs of the Declaration of Independence state the grievances the colonies had against Britain. Every day people use this idea to express his or her opposition or support for legislation. Sometimes there are large rallies here at the capitol.

The last line of the Declaration of Independence reads "...we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor." This means that on July 4, 1776, fifty-six people signed a document recognizing that they would sacrifice being killed for treason for the sake of their new country. This was the risk they took for freedom. Many different nationalities fought for this one cause. Today, during the Fourth of July, the same nationalities, along with many others, come to celebrate the same freedom.

Every day we have people fighting to protect our freedoms. Our founding fathers had to keep fighting to maintain our freedom. We have fought in World War I and World War II. Today Americans are stationed all over the world, away from their families, so we can live in a place without our lives being threatened.

This Fourth of July, remember the freedom we have and how many people have fought and are fighting to continue our freedom.

Enjoy and celebrate your freedom this Fourth of July.

If you have questions or comments about this issue or any other issue please feel free to contact me toll free at 866-768-3987 or by email at bstouffer@senate.mo.gov.

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