

Week of June 29, 2009



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[Celebrating Our Country's Independence](#)

Though we look forward to the Fourth of July every year because it may mean a day off work and free time with our families and friends, we often overlook what the holiday truly signifies. As we celebrate our country's independence with barbecues, fireworks and parades, it is important to understand the sacrifices that were made so we could be a free nation.

On July 4, 1776, the visionary members of the Continental Congress voted to approve the Declaration of Independence. They recognized that by doing so, they were committing an act of treason against the British Empire. And yet, they believed so deeply in the "American experiment"—the creation of a country where people were free and even guaranteed the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness—that potential rewards far overshadowed potential risks. Such a promise had never been made before, and today, the United States is the most liberated country in the world.

Thomas Jefferson, our third U.S. president and the inspiration for naming Missouri's beautiful capital city, was the Declaration's primary author. Perhaps the most famous and awe-inspiring line of the document says:

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.

We must not forget that the gift of freedom that has been handed down to us from our Founding Fathers and subsequent generations was earned, and continues to be earned, at a considerable cost. The courage shown more than 230 years ago lives on in our brave

soldiers, who serve at home and abroad to protect the freedom our forefathers worked tirelessly to provide.

As we reflect on our history, it helps us realize that although we may come from unique backgrounds, have different ideologies and offer different solutions to problems facing our nation and state, our fundamental goal is to protect the principles this country is solidly founded upon. It is important that we set aside our differences to celebrate this great country and honor the heroes who are serving and defending our freedom. On this Independence Day, I encourage all Missourians to recognize the blessing of freedom that we have been granted.

As always, please feel free to contact me or my staff with any questions or concerns at any time. We look forward to hearing your comments and suggestions and trying to answer any questions you may have. You can reach us by phone at 866-277-0882 (toll-free) or 573-751-2272, or by fax at 573-526-7381.

Senator David Pearce serves Bates, Cass, Johnson and Vernon counties in the 31st State Senate District.

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