



## OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

July 4, 2026

*A Letter To The Future From California, as the United States commemorates the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.*

To the People of California and the United States:

We won't presume that the people reading this letter in the year 2276 will know much about us; perhaps our time here is remembered with nothing more than a few lines in a history text stored somewhere. Time passes, generations come and go, and memory fades. Looking back, our society today is beyond the imagination and dreams of anyone living in 1776 California. And so we come to this task with a humble recognition that our description of California may seem quaint and childlike to you. But on the 250th anniversary of the United States, we write in a spirit of hope for California's future and in the belief that our values today will endure and prosper over the centuries to come.

We believe deeply in the American experiment and the democratic values of our founding revolution and the Constitution. What makes this country, and the state of California, so exceptional is our faith in democracy and in ourselves as dreamers and doers. It is perseverance and willpower, and perhaps some degree of stubbornness, that have led us through dark chapters in American history. We persist in upholding the values of pluralism, liberty, and diversity because we know there is no other real way to govern ourselves. Our country was founded on the belief that we have an inalienable right to the pursuit of happiness and that we are the creators of our own destiny. On July 4, 2026, this spirit persists in California.

Over the past 250 years, we have seen our country transform into something far beyond the Founders' wildest dreams. And perhaps no state has transformed as much as California, the living embodiment of the frontier spirit. This is a state born of ambition, as people flocked to the land of opportunity. This is also a state built

on the genocide of Native people, and a state built by immigrants who were often exploited and attacked. Today, California has become the vanguard of progress, the birthplace of both labor rights and civil rights movements, and a safe haven for people seeking refuge from discrimination and hate. California is a product of its history, but we are not defined by it. We choose again and again to learn from our past. And it has made us stronger.

On this date, California is a thriving democracy, with tens of thousands of entrepreneurial businesses, world-class universities, and stunning natural beauty that we fiercely protect. Nearly 40 million people call California home, with more than half living south of the Tehachapi Mountains. We are a diverse group of people, and one of the most pluralistic societies in the world. About 44% of our households speak a language other than English – Spanish, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Punjabi, Dari, Cantonese, Arabic, Korean, Russian, and Armenian, among many others.

Our companies are embracing the development of artificial intelligence and pursuing advances in quantum technology, fusion energy, biotechnology, medical science, solar power, and other alternatives to fossil fuels, which we predict will be depleted well before you read this letter. We have a thriving space exploration industry that helped send four astronauts on a mission around the moon this year. We are feeding the world with vast farms where we produce dairy products, beef, almonds, grapes, strawberries, lettuce, and tomatoes in abundance. More than one-third of our nation's vegetables and three-quarters of our fruits and nuts are grown in California. Tens of thousands of people graduate each year from our world-renowned colleges and universities, where faculty and staff have been awarded 75 Nobel Prizes. We are building water storage to prepare for drier years, protecting our salmon habitats, and carefully managing California's 33 million acres of forest, which cover about a third of our state. Our entertainment and gaming industries captivate billions of people. Each year, more than 250 million tourists visit California from around the globe.

We can't help but wonder: Is Apple, California's most iconic company at this moment, still in existence 250 years from now? Is Nvidia? Is Disneyland? Do people still travel to see the vistas of Yosemite and Big Sur, or experience firsthand our redwood forests and Southern California beaches? Are there still salmon in the rivers? Have we done enough, or did we squander our blessings? Right now, America stands at a crossroads. There is a deep anxiety about the future. We are running out of time to turn the tide against the forces of climate change that are ravaging the world. We have seen the sanctity of our democracy threatened by attempts to roll back voting rights, civil rights, an independent judiciary, and a free press; the validity of our democratic elections is in question. Books are being banned. We are addicted to our screens, spending hours a day scrolling through seconds-long videos that leave us

disconnected. Some have grown rich beyond imagination, while the middle and working classes struggle to make ends meet. Misinformation spreads so widely that we disagree on basic facts. Ideology is prioritized over solutions, and hate gets more traction than cooperation. Gender and racial wars are roiling the country, but California remains a beacon of hope.

Throughout all this, we are extraordinarily proud of this state and the many talented people who make their homes and livelihoods here. We have seen communities step up for each other, in the face of pandemics and natural disasters, and assaults on our democratic institutions and values. This is California love, because together we are California strong. We hope that, from your vantage point, you can see the courage and resilience of those who stood for what was right, no matter the personal cost.

We hope that you, on July 4, 2276, can recognize the remarkable progress we have made during our time on this planet, our advancements in technology, our breakthroughs in medicine, science, the humanities, and art. We hope that our actions today are serving you well and that we have made a positive difference.

With love from California,

Gavin Newsom  
Governor of California

Jennifer Siebel Newsom  
First Partner of California