



## **America's Freedom Festival**

### **Report to the Utah Legislature and Funding Request - January 2026**

I'm Jim Evans and I've been involved with America's Freedom Festival for close to 14 years and our Executive Director for the past 7 years.

#### **Vision**

Since our inception, we've helped celebrate the founding of America and the spirit of the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. We focus on the values of God, Family, Freedom and Country. We promote love and unity in our communities and across America. ALL are invited to participate in service and volunteerism.

#### **Mission of America's Freedom Festival**

America's Freedom Festival is a nonprofit foundation organized with four main purposes:

Celebrate

Teach

Honor

and Strengthen

the traditional American values of God, family, freedom and country.

The festival's events celebrate our freedoms and the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, teach the rising generation to appreciate and preserve these freedoms, honor those who have distinguished themselves in the cause of liberty nationally and internationally and strengthen individuals in remembering their own civic duties and responsibilities.

We do this through supporting over 30 events each year.

### **Celebrate**

The Stadium of Fire, Grand Parade, Children's Parade, Freedom Days (three days of food, entertainment, crafts and carnival rides), golf and softball tournaments, Balloon Fest, Carillon Concert, and the Freedom Run (1-mile, 5K, and 10K events) admirably accomplish the goal of celebration.

### **Teach**

The Hope of America Student Showcase, Essay Contest, Speech Contest, Colonial Festival, Cries of Freedom, Military Village, Patriotic Service, Flag Retirement Ceremony, and Historic Provo Tours and Reception, contribute greatly to educating all participants and spectators in the history, freedom and joys of living in America.

### **Honor**

Each year the Freedom Awards Gala honors individuals who have gone to extraordinary lengths to establish and preserve freedom in this country and

abroad and bring them to Provo so that we can all learn from their great examples and be uplifted by their heroism.

### **Strengthen**

Each of our events serves to strengthen individuals in remembering their own civic duties and responsibilities. Our hope is that participants will leave our activities with a greater feeling of patriotism, unite as a community, and sense their personal obligation to sustain and preserve these values.

### **Target**

We annually have participation from over 650,000 attendees participating in one or more of our events.

### **Additional items of information**

- Each year, the festival operates with hundreds of volunteers including the Board of Trustees and the Event Chairs – Small Office staff
- The parade has the highest number of attendees for any of our events with over 320,000 people attending on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July
- The Stadium of fire is televised, at our cost, through the Armed Forces Network to our service men and women around the world in reaching an estimated one million members of the services
- The Stadium of Fire averages 47,000 attendees each year with another 150,000+ that watch the fireworks from outside the stadium

- Based on numbers from our annual survey, **54% are from Utah County, 32% from other areas of the state, and 14% from outside the state**
- Also based on the above-mentioned survey, the economic impact for our area from food, hotels, gas, sales, etc., is over \$25,700,000 per year
- Sponsors: this past year we had over 42 business and public sponsors contributing over \$704,325 in support of festival events.

Founders: over 51 individuals/families contributing over \$151,000 towards the festival.

In-kind: Over \$288,105 in in-kind donations to the festival.

- The Freedom Awards Gala honors 4-5 individuals a year with at least one local honoree and others from around the world
- The festival operates on an annual budget of approximately \$3.3 million

#### **Educational Events supported in part with State Funds**

1. **Several Educational Events** of Storytelling, Speech, Essay,
2. Hope of America Student Showcase: 3 nights, 99 schools, 12k attending each night to watch 5<sup>th</sup> graders through song and dance celebrate our freedoms and liberties and honor those who serve in our armed forces and first responders. Past funding from the State of Utah has helped offset the costs to produce the Hope of America program.
3. Hope of America 50 States: The Freedom Festival has a current initiative to roll out the Hope of America program to all 50 states.

**Funding Request for 2026:**

On behalf of our board of trustees and the 650,000 individuals who enjoy the Freedom Festival sponsored activities we thank you for your past support and consideration this year for once again appropriating \$100,000 to this critical cause in our community.

**We are especially excited this year to team up with America 250 – Utah in using our Freedom Festival events during 2026 to also support the efforts by the state America 250 team.**

**A CELEBRATION OF FREEDOM**  
**America—250 Years**  
**God • Family • Freedom • Country**  
**America's Freedom Festival at Provo**

As we commemorate 250 years of the United States of America, we honor a nation born under the guiding hand of Providence, built by courageous families, defended by patriots, and sustained by the enduring ideals of God, Family, Freedom, and Country. From humble beginnings on the eastern seaboard to the vast and vibrant land we love today, America's story is one of faith, sacrifice, self-government, innovation, and the unyielding pursuit of liberty.

Two hundred and fifty years ago, our Founders declared boldly that "all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights," including "Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness." These immortal words continue to light our path, reminding us of the divine spark within every soul and our sacred responsibility to preserve freedom for future generations.

We express profound gratitude for the countless men and women who have given "the last full measure of devotion" to defend these freedoms. Their courage purchased the liberties we now enjoy. We honor them. We remember them. We pledge never to forget the price of freedom.

We echo the timeless reminder of President Ronald Reagan: *"Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction... It must be fought for, protected,*

*and handed on."* As we celebrate this historic milestone, we recommit ourselves to keeping the flame of liberty burning brightly.

We share the resolve shared by President John F. Kennedy: *"Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe, to assure the survival and the success of liberty."*

**Therefore, on this 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of America, we proclaim that:**

- **We reaffirm our trust in God**, the Author of liberty and Giver of rights.
- **We strengthen our Families**, the first and most essential unit of a free and moral society.
- **We defend Freedom**, standing united against tyranny in all its forms.
- **We cherish our Country**, honoring its past, elevating its present, and securing its future.

May God's blessings continue to shine upon this land. And may this anniversary inspire every American to lift their eyes, raise their voices, and renew their devotion to the great cause of freedom and stand as a beacon of hope for generations to come.

**PROCLAIMED THIS DAY**

In celebration of a nation chosen for liberty, preserved by sacrifice, and destined for greatness.

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