

Short summary for social media / press:

Inspired by the ideals of 1776, we, the delegates of the 2026 Young Peoples' Continental Congress, pledge to advance liberty, equality, opportunity, and democratic participation, strengthening the bonds between generations and working to build a more just, prosperous, and hopeful future for all Americans.

2026 Young Peoples' Continental Congress Declaration of Aspirations

July 24, 2026,

Whereas, on September 5, 1774, delegates from twelve colonies assembled at Carpenters' Hall in Philadelphia as the first Continental Congress to seek a common voice amid division, conflict, and uncertainty; charged with finding a unified purpose for the communities each represented;

And whereas, from those deliberations—and from the revolutionary movement they helped catalyze—emerged the Declaration of Independence, adopted on July 4, 1776, whose enduring assertion that all people possess fundamental rights and whose vision of government grounded in the consent of the governed have, for more than 250 years, challenged successive generations to pursue a more perfect union;

And whereas, delegates from the states and territories of the United States have again gathered at Carpenters' Hall to reflect on the rich and complex history of the nation's founding, to consider the enduring significance of the ideals proclaimed in 1776, and to imagine how those aspirations might guide the present and future of our country;

Now, therefore, we, the delegates of the 2026 Young Peoples' Continental Congress, do hereby declare the following aspirations for our peers and our country:

1. Liberty, equality, and dignity for all

That the young people of today affirm the equal worth and inherent dignity of every person and commit ourselves to building a United States—and a world—in which all people are treated with fairness, respect, and humanity;

That we aspire to a future in which the promises of liberty, justice, and equality are made real in the daily lives of all people; where rights are not merely declared but protected in practice, opportunity is not limited by circumstance or identity, and every person is able to participate fully in civic, social, and economic life;

That we commit to carrying forward the unfinished work of extending freedom and providing equal protection to all, rejecting racism, discrimination, exclusion, and division, and instead strengthening a diverse nation in which each generation broadens the circle of belonging and helps create a more perfect union.

2. Education is a foundation of opportunity and preparation for informed civic engagement

That we affirm education as a necessary ingredient for collective liberty and commit to building a future in which every person—regardless of geography, background, or circumstance—has access to 1 fair and equal opportunities to learn, grow, and thrive;

That we aspire to an education system that empowers all students by cultivating curiosity, critical thinking, public responsibility, and participation in democratic life;

That we commit to ensuring that educational opportunity is not reserved for the fortunate few but extended to all, so that every person may develop their talents, contribute to their communities, and help shape the future of our nation;

3. Democratic participation and government accountability

That we affirm that self-government depends upon an informed, engaged, and active citizenry, and commit to strengthening a democracy in which every person has the opportunity to enact change and every voice is treated with respect and heard in good faith;

That we aspire to a nation in which public institutions remain accountable to the people; digital civic space provides a free and open forum for debate; and leaders exercise their responsibilities with integrity and transparency in their policies, goals, and ideals;

That we commit to renewing the institutions and habits of democratic life through civic learning, open dialogue, and shared responsibility, so that civil discourse may strengthen rather than divide us and each generation may contribute to the work of building a stronger nation and a more harmonious world;

4. Equal opportunity and economic security

That every person should have a fair and equal opportunity to pursue their own individual aspirations and build a meaningful life, and commit to a future in which circumstance does not determine destiny and all people are able to contribute their talents and share in the prosperity of our nation;

That we aspire to a United States in which economic security and opportunity provide the foundation for freedom, where all people may live with dignity, support themselves and their families, understand the economic implications of government policies, and participate fully in civic and economic life;

That we commit to strengthening the conditions that allow individuals and communities to flourish, so that every generation may inherit not only greater opportunity, but also a deeper sense of stability, purpose, and hope for the future;

5. Stewardship for future generations

That we recognize our shared responsibility to future generations and commit to exercising stewardship over the institutions, communities, and resources entrusted to us so that those who follow may inherit a nation of greater opportunity, resilience, and hope.

That we aspire to build a future guided not only by present needs but by enduring responsibility, making choices with care for generations yet to come and preserving the environmental and economic conditions that allow people and communities to flourish.

That we commit to strengthening the bonds between generations and to advancing the unfinished work of creating a more perfect union, leaving to our successors a country that reflects our highest ideals and broadens the possibilities available to all.

Through these shared values and aspirations, we seek to reinforce a spirit of unity and purpose to our democratic system, so that differences are debated with integrity and decisions are made in the interest of all Americans.