

Rep. Hebl: Celebrating American freedom

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The Fourth of July is a commemoration of American independence from England and embarking upon a path of self-determination for our country. This holiday is a time to gather and celebrate as one.

The United States has come a long way since its founding. The Founding Fathers set up a system which, although flawed, has held up remarkably well for over two hundred years. I am eternally grateful that I was born here and have been given the opportunities offered to all in our great country.

Even though our system has held up this long, that isn't to say it hasn't faced its challenges. The attack on our Capitol and attempted coup on January 6, 2021, shows how tenuous democracy can be and that it must not be taken for granted. We have also had to deal with a rogue Supreme Court, which- especially lately- has abandoned the rule of law and has simply decided cases on ideology.

The quest towards a more just and equal society is long- longer than it ought to be. We have dealt with setbacks to that quest lately. We must recognize the work that must still be done, and fight for the American people when there are challenges to our freedoms and rights. We must not sit idly by as bodily autonomy is stripped from half of our population. We cannot abide the dilution of people's votes because of where they live or who they tend to vote for. We must make a stand, and help America fulfill the rights set forth in the Declaration of Independence, that all Americans are entitled to "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

The ideals which founded this great country deserve to be celebrated. I believe that America is the greatest country in the world. Whether you decide to grill out, go boating, catch a fireworks show, or simply stay inside, I urge everyone to remember

all we have been through as a country this Fourth of July and all we must do to keep it the greatest country in the world. Have a safe and happy Fourth of July!