



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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## Here's to a Happy and Safe Fourth of July

SENATOR PATTY RITCHIE June 28, 2019

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### Senator Ritchie's Weekly Column

It is hard to believe the Fourth of July is just around the corner. While Independence Day is a time to gather with friends and family to celebrate, it is also a day when we all should remember our heritage and our country's beginnings.

On July 2, 1776, the Continental Congress voted in favor of independence from Great Britain, and just two days later, delegates from the 13 colonies adopted the Declaration of Independence. Since 1776, our nation has been celebrating American independence with

everything from fireworks and cookouts, to parades and other special events to commemorate this momentous time in our history.

Here is a look at how we celebrate today, by the numbers:

- 1785: That is the year the oldest Fourth of July parade was first held. To this day, it still takes place in in Bristol, Rhode Island.
- 86: Across our country, there are 86 locations that celebrate our heritage by having the words “independence,” “liberty,” “freedom” or “eagle” in their names.
- 155 million: That is how many hot dogs are expected to be consumed this Fourth of July. In addition, Joey Chestnut holds the world record for number of hot dogs eaten in 10 minutes with a whopping total of 74.
- 16,000: Across our country, more than 16,000 fireworks displays will take place—including dozens right here in our region.
- 47 million: That is how many Americans plan to travel more than 50 miles away from home to celebrate with family and friends for the Fourth of July.

- \$6.8 billion: From burgers to barbecue sauce, that is how much Americans will spend on food for Independence Day cookouts.

However you choose to celebrate this all-American holiday, I hope it is safe and full of fun with family and friends. Happy Fourth of July!