

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** Friday, May 15, 2026

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## **SENATOR JOHN LIU ANNOUNCES “AMERICA 250” COMMUNITY CELEBRATION AND STUDENT DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE RECITATION CONTEST**

*Winners will perform at America 250 Celebration*

**Flushing, NY** – State Senator John Liu today announced a community celebration commemorating America’s 250th birthday will take place on Sunday, June 28, at 1 p.m., at Francis Lewis High School. The event will feature free food, live performances, historical re-enactments, student presentations, and interactive presentations honoring our nation’s past while inviting the community to share their hopes and dreams for America’s future.

The celebration will be held at Francis Lewis High School, named for Francis Lewis, a Queens resident, Founding Father, and signer of the Declaration of Independence.

As part of the celebration, Senator Liu is inviting students of all ages to participate in a “*Declaration of Independence Recitation Contest*.” Students are asked to submit a short, 1-minute video of themselves reading the last paragraph of the Declaration of Independence. 13 winners will be selected to participate in a live group reading of the Declaration at the celebration on June 28.

Students can upload their video submissions via Google form [HERE](#) or call Senator Liu’s office at 718-765-6675 for more information.

The event will also provide opportunities for the public to write their own messages of hope and aspirations for the future. These messages will be placed in a time capsule that will be sealed and displayed at the Flushing Branch of the Queens Public Library and opened in 50 years.

**State Senator John Liu** stated, “250 years ago, our Founding Fathers envisioned a country granting unalienable rights like the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and that all are created equal. On this milestone anniversary, we hope everyone will join us at the Francis Lewis High School, the namesake of Queens’ own Founding Father, to celebrate our freedoms and reflect on what truly makes America great, and share your hopes and dreams for the future.”

**Queens Public Library President and CEO Dennis M. Walcott** stated, “We could not think of a better place to preserve these messages than our Flushing Library, one of the busiest branches in the country and a gateway to learning, civic participation, and opportunity for millions of individuals from all backgrounds. We thank our elected officials for bringing the community together for this meaningful commemoration of America’s ideals and values, and we are honored that he is entrusting us with this time capsule containing people’s reflections on this moment in history. The Library looks forward to opening it 50 years from now.”

**Queens Borough President Donovan Richards Jr.** stated, “Looking back on 250 years of American independence, our nation’s most important moments and movements were born from

everyday residents coming together as one community to push us forward. As we live through one of those moments, I look forward to joining families from across Queens on June 28 to celebrate what it means to be Americans, reflect on how far we've come as a country and discuss our dreams for the nation's next 250 years. Let's make Queens' own Founding Father Francis Lewis proud, get engaged in our community and celebrate the ideals that make us all Americans.”

**State Assembly Member Nily Rozic** stated, “As we approach our nation’s 250th anniversary, it is especially meaningful to celebrate the ideals of democracy, freedom, and civic engagement that continue to shape our country. I am thrilled to join my colleagues in encouraging young people to connect with our history, reflect on our shared values, and envision the future they want to help build.”

**State Assembly Member Ed Braunstein** stated, “As our country prepares to mark this momentous milestone, I join my colleagues in inviting the Queens community to Francis Lewis High School for a celebration of our American democracy and the enduring ideals of our Declaration of Independence. The event will also showcase our youngest generation of Americans with student-led performances. I look forward to celebrating with you on June 28<sup>th</sup>!”

**State Senator Toby Ann Stavisky** stated, “As a former high school history teacher in Queens, I am especially delighted that our community is bringing history to life. Francis Lewis signed the Declaration of Independence as a resident of Queens. Two hundred and fifty years later, students in the borough he called home will read those words aloud at the school that carries his name. That is the kind of history worth marking. I thank my fellow cosponsors for bringing the community together to honor it.”

**City Council Member Sandra Ung** stated, “This event is not only an opportunity to honor the generations whose courage and sacrifice built our country, but also a chance for us to recommit ourselves to the enduring principles of equality, democracy, and opportunity upon which America was founded. I am proud to co-sponsor ‘America 250’ with my colleagues in government, and I look forward to coming together as a community to reflect on our shared history and celebrate the promise of our nation’s future.”

The program for the day will be organized into three themes of “*America past, present and future.*” Representing America in 1776, 13 student contest winners will reenact the nation’s founding through a live reading of the Declaration of Independence. America in 2026 will feature music, performances, and a cake-cutting ceremony. Looking ahead, attendees will contribute messages of hope for America to the time capsule, to be opened in 50 years.

Additional event cosponsors are in formation.

### **Important Dates**

Declaration of Independence Recitation Contest Deadline: Friday, May 22, 2026

### **America 250 Celebration**

Sunday, June 28, 2026 at 1 p.m. at Francis Lewis High School.

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