

Paraphrased Version **The Declaration of Independence**

Adopted by Congress, July 4, 1776

This Declaration of Independence of the thirteen United States of America is agreed to by every state.

Within the history of the human race, it might become necessary for a group of people to break apart from the country that was once their government. Respect requires that reasons be given for why they want to break apart.

We believe these truths to be easy to understand, that all people are created equal, that they have certain rights that cannot be taken or given away. **These rights are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.**

The thirteen colonies are tired of putting up with abuse from the present King of Great Britain.

Here are (some of) our complaints:

The King makes us pay all kinds of taxes but doesn't allow us to have a say in Parliament.

The King has refused to allow our colonies to make and enforce laws that will benefit our people.

The King is trying to force our colonial governments to follow his rules, he doesn't care about the laws we want and need.

The King has given more power to the military than to our colonial governments. His military is "above the law."

In many cases we are not allowed to have a trial by jury. Judges are unfair because the king has control of them.

In times of peace, British soldiers are living in American colonies and we are forced to feed them and let them live in our homes.

The King has cut off trade with all parts of the world. We can only buy from England.

The King won't let our settlers move to new lands near the Appalachian Mountains.

The King has taken our goods, burned our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

The King is waging war against us.

As representatives of the United States of America, we declare our independence from the British government. We claim the power to make decisions for ourselves and to control our country.

We promise to each other our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor.

Complaint Against the King	Historical Event	Inalienable Rights Life, Liberty, and Property	How did colonists react?
	Townshend Acts Tea Tax Sugar Act		Colonists protested the taxes by sending a letter to the King and boycotting British goods. Government officials were tarred and feathered.
	Quartering Act		Colonists protested, killed some British soldiers, and refused to obey the law. They refused to feed the soldiers or take them into their homes.
	Townshend Acts		Colonists protested by boycotting British products and smuggling goods from other countries illegally.
	Proclamation of 1763		They ignored the law. Daniel Boone and others crossed the line and settled on land near the Appalachian Mountains in spite of the proclamation.