

Local and State Declarations of Independence

The Continental Congress voted to break away from King George III on July 2, 1776. Then it approved the final wording of the Declaration on July 4. But the delegates didn't make that decision on their own. People across the colonies already supported independence. **Towns, counties, and states** sent messages to their **representatives**, urging them to vote for separation. These actions show that ordinary Americans across the colonies played a key role in the push for independence—not only leaders in Philadelphia.

Essential Questions

- How did some American colonists show Congress they supported breaking away from Britain?
- What is the relationship between the people and their government representatives?
- How do local and state declarations show the idea of consent of the governed?

Vocabulary

Consent of the governed—An idea introduced by political thinker John Locke. It means that a government only has power because the people give it permission to rule.

Representative—A person chosen by the people to speak and make decisions for them in the government.

Town—A town is a small community where people live close together. During the American Revolution, towns were centers of daily life, with homes, shops, churches, and local government meetings.

County-- A county is a large area that includes several towns and the land around them. During the American Revolution, counties handled government services like courts and taxes collection for both towns and rural areas.

State-- A state is a large region made up of many counties. During the American Revolution, states acted like independent countries that chose to connect with a

central government. Each state made its own laws and protected the rights of its people.

Utah Social Studies Standards

U.S. I Strand 3: The American Revolution

U.S. I Standard 3.1: Students will use primary sources to identify the significant events, ideas, people, and methods used to justify or resist the Revolutionary movement.

U.S. I Standard 3.3: Students will use primary sources to compare the contributions of key people and groups to the Revolution, such as Paul Revere, Thomas Paine, Abigail Adams, the Sons and Daughters of Liberty, and Thomas Jefferson.

U.S. I Standard 3.4: Students will explain how the ideas and events of the American Revolution continue to shape American identity.