On July 4, 1776, the Continental Congress approved the Declaration of Independence, setting the 13 colonies on the road to freedom as a sovereign nation. This most American of holidays will be marked with typical festivities ranging from fireworks, parades and concerts to more casual family gatherings and barbecues across the country. As we celebrate this Independence Day, we reflect on how our Founding Fathers enshrined the importance of statistics in our Constitution as a vital tool for measuring our people, places and economy.

The following facts are made possible by the invaluable responses to the U.S. Census Bureau’s surveys. We appreciate the public’s cooperation as we continuously measure America’s people, places and economy.

**Did You Know?**

**2.5 million**
In July 1776, the estimated number of people living in the newly independent nation.  
Source: [Historical Statistics of the United States: 1789-1945](https://www.census.gov/hchistory/)

**326 million**
The nation’s estimated population on July 1, 2017.  
Source: [Vintage 2017 Population Estimates](https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/popest/estimates.html)

**56**
The number of signers to the Declaration of Independence. It is also worth noting that:
John Hancock was the first signer, and a merchant by trade. In 2015, 1.1 million business establishments with paid employees, like Hancock, were in the retail trade industry. Source: 2016 Geography Area Series: County Business Patterns, Table CB1500A11

Benjamin Franklin, who represented Pennsylvania, was the oldest of the signers at age 70. Franklin County, Pa., had an estimated population of 154,234 as of July 1, 2017, and York City, Pa., had a population of 446,078 as of July 1, 2017. Edward Rutledge, of South Carolina, was the youngest at age 26. South Carolina had an estimated population 5,024,369 as of July 1, 2017. Source: Vintage 2017 Population Estimates

$368.6 million
The value of fireworks sales by establishments classified as NAICS 453998, all other miscellaneous store retailers (except tobacco stores) in 2012. Source: 2012 Economic Census, NAICS: 453998

Patriotic Places
- Counties and census incorporated places that contain the word “Liberty” in the name. Source: 2017 Population Estimates
- Counties that have “Union” in the name. Source: 2017 Population Estimates

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