



Big Woods Declaration 2026



"We are the ones we have been waiting for." – Jordan

"Love your neighbor as yourself." – Jesus

"We all do better when we all do better." – Wellstone

"All life is necessarily group life." – Veblen

"We are right to be afraid." – Paley

Two hundred and fifty years after our original Declaration of Independence, Americans face a new threat to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. When the United States of America was founded, the threat was the tyranny of a single king. Today, the threat is the tyranny of elite, entitled members of a **Counting Class**^{N1} who wield nearly unlimited money power. This class of Counts waits on **Free Income**^{N2} to inflate runaway **Money Counts**^{N3}. Armed with extreme money, Counts upset balance with extremity and reduce American citizens to subjects. Counts break the promise of the **American Dream**^{N4}.

We the people of the United States of America can see that we are being left behind. Americans can tell that we don't have equal say in the decisions that shape our lives. Americans know that extreme money is corrupting our corporations, our governments, our families, and our relationships with neighbors. Americans can feel the hit to our dignity when we don't have the ability to pay for family needs and to keep up with the demands of today's world. We can see that we are missing out on the American Dream.

Our **American Life**^{N5} has been a great movement toward liberty and justice for all. America has generated wondrous abundance, breathtaking advances in science and technology, awesome creations in arts and entertainment, and a standard of living above anything the founders of our country could have imagined two and a half centuries ago. Our capitalist republic thrives on shared prosperity and the consent of the people.

Today, America is caught in a national crisis unlike any our country has faced before. Our American way of life is endangered by a Counting Class that throttles opportunity and cuts off the American Dream. Elite Counts hoard extreme money, retreat from the real world, and force their whims and wants on Americans without our consent.

America is held together by the strength and effort of all of us in the **Contributing Classes**^{N6}. Contributors are the Americans who show up each day to make, grow, create, and maintain things, to help and care for one another. Contributing Americans include everyone from families working to make ends meet, to middle class professionals, to farmers and wage workers, to business executives. We're parents, students, artists, volunteers, and caregivers.

Elite, entitled Counts are alien to this Contributing America. Counts are foreign to even our richest neighbors. Counts can choose to simply wait for Free Income to inflate their out-of-control, extreme Money Counts. They collect gains in Free Income as automatic as a clock, requiring no skill, knowledge, experience, or effort. They can stay exempt from work and taxes. Counts just keep ticking up the ranks of the Counting Class.

What Counts take out as Free Income is the value of the **Public Gains of America**^{N7}. That's trillions of dollars of American-made wealth. America thrives when we cycle our Public Gains back into American Life to power new growth. Then all of us in the Contributing Classes, richer and poorer, can make a greater American future.

America is an incredible engine of prosperity, formed of:

- **Public Knowledge**^{N8} (K) All the know-how from previous generations we inherit, develop, and pass along
- **Public Investment**^{N9} (I) All we do to provide public options up to the American standards of equal freedom, equal security, and equal opportunity
- **Public Resources**^{N10} (R) Everything we draw on and keep healthy in the real world, environmental and human
- **Public Extensions**^{N11} (E) All the ways we flex our power to adapt to changes, keep balance, and get things done

This generator, this **KIRE Engine of Prosperity**^{N12} falters when Counts capture so much of America's Public Gains and fail to pay their debts to society. They hoard and withhold the money we need to fuel Public Knowledge, Public Investment, Public Resources, and Public Extensions. The Counting Class takes apart what Americans have put together.

Members of the elite, entitled Counting Class live in denial. They show a lack of humble gratitude. They make believe that they are "self made." They refuse to accept their true dependence on America. They accuse Americans of their own failings: avoiding work, not earning their keep, suffering envy, and wasting resources. Counts complain about the needs of Contributing Americans and try to replace us with machines. They shirk responsibility for the extremism that they sponsor and inflame with extreme money.

The Counts of the Counting Class turn their backs on America, then rig our country for their self gain. They leave our neighborhoods behind, but tighten a remote grip on American lives. Runaway inflation of their Money Counts leaves us all worth less.

America thrives on the free and healthy competition of efforts and ideas. But America loses balance when entitled elites cross the **Counting Class Line**^{N13}. That's the point where the America we love falls subject to the corruption of extreme money. That's the point where a Counting Class emerges, a radical imbalance in our capitalist republic.

Armed with lethal extreme money, Counts endanger our American way of life:

- Counts **withdraw from America**^{D1}
- Counts **keep a grip on American lives**^{D2}
- Counts **inflate the costs of living in America**^{D3}
- Counts **drive America into debt**^{D4}
- Counts **prey on the wealth of Americans**^{D5}
- Counts **hoard the Public Gains of America**^{D6}
- Counts **limit the wealth of Americans**^{D7}
- Counts **take the future from young Americans**^{D8}
- Counts **reject the American work ethic**^{D9}
- Counts **shirk responsibility**^{D10}
- Counts **awaken crude attitudes**^{D11}
- Counts **push extreme plans on Americans**^{D12}
- Counts **cheapen God and country**^{D13}
- Counts **dishonor military public servants**^{D14}
- Counts **undercut America's world standing**^{D15}
- Counts **abuse America's land, water, air**^{D16}
- Counts **imperil the American lifespan**^{D17}
- Counts **shatter fellowship**^{D18}
- Counts **corrupt charitable giving**^{D19}
- Counts **corrupt education**^{D20}
- Counts **corrupt corporations**^{D21}
- Counts **corrupt governments**^{D22}
- Counts **impair American judgment**^{D23}
- Counts **warp real debate**^{D24}
- Counts **replace qualified leaders in America**^{D25}
- Counts **threaten American democracy**^{D26}
- Counts **threaten capitalist America**^{D27}

Contributing Americans can call out these dangers. We can say, "Enough!" to the extreme money of elite, entitled Counts. We can unite as equals in all our differences to reclaim America's Public Gains and regenerate our American Life. We can bring America up to our standards of equal freedom, equal security, and equal opportunity.

When we stand united, Contributing Americans can save our American way of life:

- We can **notice the Counts in America**^{S1}
- We can **remember Counts are just real people**^{S2}
- We can **trim back out-of-control Money Counts**^{S3}
- We can **reclaim the Public Gains of America**^{S4}
- We can **restrain the wrongdoing of Counts**^{S5}
- We can **stop Counts from fleeing responsibility**^{S6}
- We can **defend the values of the Contributing Classes**^{S7}
- We can **embrace the spirit of insubordination**^{S8}
- We can **evolve our outdated institutions**^{S9}
- We can **decide what America's future will be**^{S10}
- We can **expand Public Knowledge**^{S11}
- We can **commit to Public Investment**^{S12}
- We can **protect Public Resources**^{S13}
- We can **exercise Public Extensions**^{S14}
- We can **live and let live as equals**^{S15}
- We can **champion the American Dream**^{S16}

There is a deep gulf in America between Counts and Contributors. Armed with extreme money, the Counting Class wields lopsided power over all American lives. No American can live free in the shadow of a Count.

Americans can choose to stand united with our neighbors against the tyranny of the Counting Class. Americans can achieve healthy balance. We can make a future of, by, and for the people. We can renew the American Dream of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, with justice for all. ■

The Big Woods Declaration (BWD) is a First Amendment petition to the American people and our government. It is not limited to any political party or group. The BWD may be shared and reused under the terms of the CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license. This core declaration and the full BWD are available online: <https://BigWoodsDeclaration.com>

<https://BigWoodsDeclaration.com>
a declaration of independence from billionaires