

“America Lives Here”
Governor Greg Gianforte’s Second Inaugural Address
January 6, 2025

My fellow Montanans, thank you for the trust you have placed in me to lead our great state.

Before I begin, I want to thank a few people. To my wife, Susan: Your love, encouragement, and unwavering support are my foundation. Without you, I wouldn’t be here today, and I’m eternally grateful.

To my partner in the Montana comeback, Lieutenant Governor Kristen Juras: Thank you for your steadfast counsel, friendship, and commitment to serving our great state. Together, we’ve worked hard to deliver results for Montanans. And I’m honored to continue that work alongside you.

To Chief Justice Cory Swanson: I look forward to seeing you lead the Montana Supreme Court with integrity – ensuring that our courts uphold the law, not political agendas. Your dedication to our first principles gives us great confidence in the judiciary’s role in preserving liberty.

And to my fellow Constitutional Officers, and legislators: Congratulations. I look forward to working with you to secure an even brighter future for Montana.

As I stand before you today, I am filled with optimism about Montana's future and America's future as well. Thomas Jefferson once said, "I like the dreams of the future better than the history of the past." Let us dream boldly and work together to make our dreams a reality.

Today, as I look across this crowd, I am reminded of something profound about Montana: America Lives Here.

It lives here in the hearts of each person who calls this place home. But Montana is more than just a place: it’s a promise and a way of life. It’s where freedom roams as wide as our skies, where opportunity is as vast as our plains, where resilience runs as deep as our rivers.

Here in Montana: our hardworking farmers and ranchers feed the world; we enjoy our God-given freedoms that no government and no bureaucrat can take from us; our police officers, firefighters, first responders, and service members protect our way of life; our teachers unlock the imagination of our students, building a brighter future; our miners keep our lights on — not just in our state, but across the region and world; our entrepreneurs innovate and create good-paying jobs.

Montana remains the frontier for every American to reach his or her full potential.

That’s because the best of America, and the American Dream, lives here, in Montana.

And it’s here, where we are proving what is possible when the government gets out of the way and empowers its people.

Today, I am optimistic—not just about Montana’s future but about America’s future as well.

Four years ago as we took the oath of office, we faced uncertainty in the wake of a pandemic that upended our lives. Families grieved. Businesses were shuttered. Kids weren’t in the classroom. Government mandates dictated our lives. Our dreams were put on hold – albeit temporarily.

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But then something extraordinary happened. Montanans – true to our spirit – rose up. Together, we unleashed freedom. We reopened our economy. And we proved that with determination, we could weather any storm. We have emerged from the storm stronger than ever.

But like the effects of any storm, there have been headwinds, from failed leadership in Washington, D.C. Inflation, rising prices, and a higher cost of living have made it harder for families to make ends meet. An irresponsible border policy caused crime and fentanyl to pour across our state and nation.

But despite these headwinds, working together, we delivered.

With the help of our partners in the legislature, we let Montanans keep more of what they earn, with the largest income tax cut in state history – leaving more money in the pockets of Montanans at every income level. Thanks to the Montana National Guard, we did our part to help secure the southern border, because we know a country without borders is no country at all. And we enacted conservative reforms to unleash our economy and empower our workers.

Now, Montana is a national leader. Montanans’ wages grew at the second-fastest rate in the country over the last four years, outpacing inflation. More Montanans are working today than ever before, with record job and business creation. And we expanded public access to more than 100,000 acres of public lands, because public lands belong in public hands.

On Election Day, Montanans endorsed our vision. They chose leadership that understands tax dollars belong to the people, not the government; leadership that stands with the men and women of law enforcement; leadership that invests in our future, especially our children’s futures; leadership that brings the American Dream into greater reach for every Montanan; and leadership that sees America as a fundamentally good place, filled with good, hard working people.

For the first time in nearly 130 years, Montanans have entrusted Republicans with every statewide office, both chambers of the legislature, and every congressional seat.

Ultimately, Montanans spoke loud and clear: they want leadership that delivers. That trust carries a solemn responsibility, and together, we will deliver.

As we look to the future, our vision remains: create more good-paying jobs for Montanans, open the doors of greater opportunity, and protect our Montana way of life. This conservative vision — centered on family, community, and our way of life — will continue to guide us.

This is a historic moment.

And, ladies and gentleman, Montanans have sent us here to work together to help them with the challenges they face: to help them keep more of their hard-earned money, to reduce taxes, to stand up for law enforcement and improve public safety, to strengthen our communities, and to invest in, and for, our next generation.

As I take office for a second term today, I pledge not only to continue fighting for you, but to also share the lessons we’ve learned here with the rest of the country.

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Because America needs more of what Montana has to offer.

Serving as your governor, I’ve seen it firsthand. One of the best and most important parts of my job is being able to meet with Montanans where they live and work. Every year since I’ve held office, I’ve honored my commitment to visit Montanans in every one of our 56 counties. I’ve sat down with parents and teachers, who help students across our state reach their full, outstanding potential. I’ve sat down with farmers and ranchers, who produce the world’s best ag products. I’ve sat down with small business owners and innovators, who drive our expanding economy.

And you know what I’ve learned?

There is no monopoly on good ideas. Despite our divided politics, Montanans are united in defense of this – The Last Best Place.

Edmund Burke, an English statesman who deeply influenced the American Founders, once wrote: *Society is a partnership between the dead, the living, and the yet to be born.*

I think that’s true.

Whether you’re a legislator, a Constitutional Officer, or a local official, we’re all motivated by that principle: to leave Montana, and America, better than how we found it.

As I said four years ago, I look forward to working with anyone – Democrat, Republican, or independent – who has a good idea. That’s what our United States is all about.

With what we’ve been able to achieve together, Montana can and should be a model for our sometimes fractured nation.

We are more than just a place on a map; we are the beating heart of America's promise.

The best of America lives here, in each and every Montanan.

I am deeply humbled by the trust you have placed in me and our vision. Together, we will continue to nurture the American dream that flourishes in our people, ensuring that Montana remains not just the Last Best Place, but a shining example of what our nation can and should be.

By the grace of God, we will deliver for our families, our communities, and our way of life – because when Montana thrives, America thrives.

May God bless you, our great state of Montana, and these United States of America.