



Volume 1, Issue 6 — June 2026

Democracy Chronicles

From our President Luis Sanchez

There are days when I can barely stand to read or hear the news. The warning signs that Donald Trump was unfit for the presidency appeared early. "The moment he mocked a disabled reporter, I knew I would never vote for him for Town Dog Catcher, leave alone US

President." That single disgraceful act was followed by many more: attacking the wives of fellow GOP candidates, disparaging Gold Star families and war heroes like John McCain, and maligning a Mexican-American judge whose only offense was ruling against him. And all of this came before he incited an insurrection at the U.S. Capitol with false claims of a stolen election.

In his second term, he has grown even more reckless. He launched a war with Iran without congressional approval, without making his case to the American people, and without any coherent exit strategy. He has unleashed masked marauders into American cities to terrorize not only undocumented immigrants but also citizens—"such as Alex Pretti and Sandra Good, who dare to resist his fascist tactics." He has weaponized federal prosecutions against political opponents, including former allies. He sued the IRS for ten billion dollars, then dropped the suit in exchange for immunity from past tax liabilities and a \$1.7 billion slush fund for his supporters. He has refused to comply with court orders and congressional deadlines regarding the Epstein files. And this, sadly, is only the visible portion of the iceberg.

The moral example he is setting for future generations is base, corrosive, and arguably beyond redemption. I know Americans who have left the country because they cannot bear what it has become under Trump. I understand their despair, but I cannot follow them. Despite its flaws, I love this nation for its democratic ideals, and I am committed to fighting for its reform and preservation as long as I draw breath.

How could I do otherwise? This republic—this fragile experiment in self-governance, this dream of liberty and justice for all—is the most important inheritance I can leave to my children and grandchildren. It is worth far more than any financial estate. I refuse to surrender it to Trump and his followers.

But do not mistake my resolve for partisan loyalty. I am a lifelong independent who believes in low taxes, free enterprise, federalism, law and order, sensible immigration policy, and a strong but judicious

foreign policy. These principles once defined the Republican Party—the party of Abraham Lincoln—but they have disintegrated under Trump’s influence.

We Americans now face the urgent task of persuading future generations that character, truth, and decency matter even when they are inconvenient or unpopular; that safeguarding the playing fields of democracy is more important than winning the next election; and that if we hope to live together for another 250 years, we must rediscover a political center that does not tilt too far left or right. This message may not make for a catchy sound bite in our polarized, digitized age, but it remains profoundly true.ⁱ



JOIN THE FIRST ANNUAL

DEMOCRACY SUMMIT

SPONSORED BY
THE MADISON-LINCOLN INITIATIVE



Featuring Keynote Speaker

CONGRESSMAN RO KHANNA

Monday, July 13, 2026 • 2PM to 6PM Pacific Time

HELD VIA ZOOM • LIMITED ATTENDANCE

RSVP: <https://www.eventbrite.com/o/the-madison-lincoln-initiative-121213161976>

The mission of The Madison-Lincoln Initiative is to **strengthen our republic through robust civic education**. The Democracy Summit is an annual forum for **sharing ideas and strategies** that foster **civic engagement** in schools and colleges, helping future voters protect our experiment in **self-governance**.

This year, the Summit marks the **250th anniversary** of our nation's birth. In a deeply divided time, we reaffirm our commitment to **"liberty and justice for all"** by preparing the next generation to participate effectively in a free and democratic society.



Safeguarding Our Democracy for Generations to Come
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Democracy Summit 2026

Safeguarding Our Democracy for Generations to Come

On July 13, 2026, The Madison-Lincoln Initiative will host its first annual Democracy Summit, bringing together educators, civic leaders, students, and engaged citizens to explore one of the defining questions of our age:

How do we strengthen democratic citizenship in an era of polarization, distrust, and civic fragmentation?

Held during the 250th anniversary year of the American republic, the Democracy Summit reflects MLI's continuing commitment to fostering civic knowledge, constitutional literacy, ethical citizenship, and respectful democratic engagement.

The Summit will feature keynote remarks from Congressman Ro Khanna, collaborative discussions on the challenges facing civic education, and practical workshops designed to equip participants with tools to strengthen democratic culture in schools and communities.

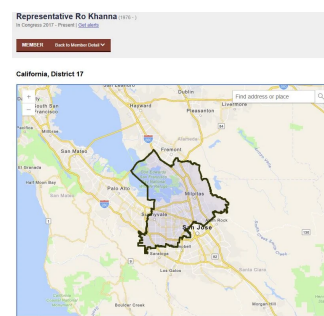
At a time when many Americans feel divided from one another and uncertain about the future of democratic institutions, the Summit seeks to reaffirm a foundational truth: self-government depends upon an informed, engaged, and responsible citizenry.

Congressman Ro Khanna

Renewing Civic Participation in the 21st Century

Ro Khanna a U.S. Congressman from California, represents California's 17th Congressional District in Silicon Valley and has become nationally known for his advocacy of civic participation, economic opportunity, technological innovation, and democratic reform.

Born in Philadelphia to immigrant parents of Indian heritage, Khanna attended the University of Chicago and Yale Law School before entering public service. Prior to serving in Congress, he worked on issues



involving manufacturing, economic competitiveness, and technology policy.

Since first being elected to Congress in 2016, Khanna has emphasized themes that resonate strongly with the mission of The Madison-Lincoln Initiative:

- Expanding civic participation
- Strengthening democratic institutions
- Encouraging informed public engagement
- Supporting economic opportunity and educational access
- Addressing the challenges created by rapid technological change

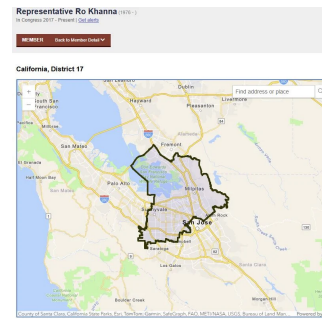
Khanna has frequently argued that democracy depends not only upon elections, but upon active citizenship and broad public participation in civic life.

In speeches and public statements, he has often emphasized the importance of restoring faith in democratic institutions through transparency, public engagement, and meaningful economic opportunity.

At the Democracy Summit, Congressman Khanna will deliver a keynote address titled:

“Renewing American Civic Promise”

The keynote will explore how democratic societies can strengthen civic engagement while addressing economic disruption, polarization, technological transformation, and declining public trust.



Democracy Summit – July 13, 2026

Celebrating 250 Years of American Civic Life

Hosted by The Madison-Lincoln Initiative

2:00 PM – 2:30 PM | Opening & Welcome

- Remarks by Luis Sanchez, President, MLI
- Overview of summit goals: civic education, engagement, and collaboration

2:30 PM – 3:00 PM | Keynote Address

Congressman Ro Khanna

“Renewing American Civic Promise”

A vision for active citizenship, economic opportunity, and democratic engagement in a rapidly changing society.

3:00 PM – 3:45 PM | Group Discussion

Barriers to Civic Education

Participants will explore challenges including:

- Lack of a national definition of civic education
- Fear of political or parental backlash
- Administrative and curricular constraints
- The growing perception of classrooms as political “risk environments”

This collaborative discussion is designed to identify common concerns while encouraging participants to share practical experiences and constructive solutions.

3:45 PM – 4:15 PM | MLI Five Pillars

Solutions in Action

The Summit will highlight how MLI’s Five Pillars address contemporary civic challenges:

1. Fostering Civil Discourse
2. Fostering Constitutional Literacy
3. Fostering Critical Reasoning

4. Fostering Media Literacy
5. Fostering Democratic Ethics

4:15 PM – 5:15 PM | Interactive Breakout Workshops

Participants may select workshops focused on:

- Civil discourse strategies
- Constitutional literacy activities
- Critical reasoning exercises
- Media literacy and source evaluation
- Democratic ethics and civic responsibility

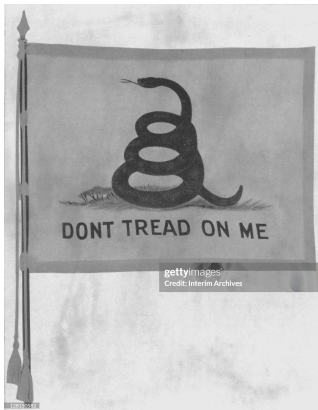
5:15 PM – 5:30 PM | Closing Session

- Reflection on key themes
- Opportunities for future participation

Building educator and civic engagement networks

**To register for tickets,
click here:**

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/democracy-summit-tickets-198668...>



Democracy in Times of Division

Historical Gatherings for Civic Renewal

American history contains many moments when citizens gathered to confront fears about democratic decline.



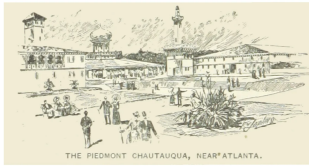
The Constitutional Convention (1787)

The most famous example remains the Constitutional Convention itself. Delegates arrived in Philadelphia amid widespread fears that the young republic might collapse under political instability and regional division. The Constitution they produced reflected not perfect agreement, but a determination to

preserve republican self-government through debate, compromise, and institutional design.

The Chautauqua Movement

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the Chautauqua movement brought lectures, civic discussions, educational programs, and public forums to communities across the United States. These gatherings reflected a belief that democracy required continuous public education and informed citizenship.



The Civil Rights Era

During the Civil Rights Movement, churches, schools, civic groups, and community organizations hosted countless local democracy forums focused on constitutional rights, citizenship, voting access, and nonviolent civic action.



America at 250

Today, as the United States marks its 250th anniversary, new civic organizations and educational initiatives are once again asking how democratic culture can be strengthened for future generations.

The Madison-Lincoln Initiative's Democracy Summit joins this long tradition of Americans gathering not because democracy is easy, but because it requires continual effort, participation, and renewal.

Why Civic Education Matters in 2026

The Democracy Summit arrives at a moment when many educators and civic leaders express concern about declining civic knowledge and

increasing political polarization.

Recent studies have shown:

- Many Americans cannot identify key constitutional principles
- Trust in public institutions has declined sharply
- Social media ecosystems often reward outrage over deliberation
- Teachers frequently report anxiety about addressing civic issues in classrooms
- Students increasingly encounter political information through fragmented and unreliable sources

At the same time, many educators are searching for practical ways to strengthen civic understanding without deepening ideological conflict.

The Madison-Lincoln Initiative believes civic education must move beyond memorization alone.

Students should learn:

- Constitutional principles
- Historical context
- Critical reasoning skills
- Media literacy
- Democratic ethics
- The habits of civil discourse

The Democracy Summit is designed to bring these ideas into practical conversation.

June 2026 Civic Education & Civic Leadership Professional Development Calendar

Jun 6	EmpowerLA Youth Conference	Los Angeles	Civic
	EmpowerLA	CA	Engaging
Jun 11–12	CA Global Education Project — Civic Leadership Summit	CA.	Action Civics

California Global Education Project

Jun 18	NCEA California Leadership Summit	CA.	Ed Leadership
	Project Citizen Teacher Institute		
Jun 21–26	Center for Civic Education	CA.	Public Policy
Jun 24–27	CALSA Summer Institute 2026	CALSA	Equity & Voice
	Foundations of Freedom Summer Institute		
Jun 29–Jul 3	CA History-Social Science Project	Cal.	Const.

Freedom's Beachhead

This is being written on May 25, Memorial Day 2026, though you are reading it in the June issue of The Madison-Lincoln Newsletter. Eighty-two years ago this coming June 6th, the vast Allied armada stormed the beaches of Normandy and began the liberation of Europe from the crushing grip of Hitler's dictatorship and occupation.

On that single day, approximately 4,414 Allied servicemen gave what Abraham Lincoln called "the last full measure of devotion" in the struggle against cruelty, tyranny, and the demented vision of a future built upon domination and subjugation. No doubt each of them hoped to survive the storm of lead, steel, and shrapnel that awaited them as they crossed the Channel toward those blood-soaked shores.

On this Memorial Day — and indeed every day — we should remember them with solemn gratitude and humility. Their courage was not abstract. It was real, costly, and profoundly human. They faced terror and uncertainty so that future generations might live in freedom rather than fear.

Perhaps the truest way to honor their sacrifice is not merely to remember what they did, but to prove ourselves worthy of it: by striving to restore decency, righteousness, and humanity to the world we now inhabit.



Lighting the Civic Torch for the Next Generation



1. National Park Service, Statue of Liberty: Construction. The torch-bearing arm was completed in 1876 and exhibited at the Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition to support fundraising for the monument.

As America enters its 250th year, the challenge before us is not merely political disagreement. Democracies have always contained disagreement.

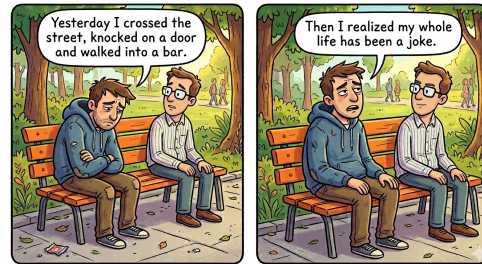
The deeper challenge is whether citizens still possess the civic knowledge, ethical grounding, and mutual trust necessary to govern themselves together.

The Democracy Summit represents one small but meaningful effort to renew those habits of citizenship.

The American experiment in self-government has endured not because each generation inherited perfect unity, but because citizens repeatedly chose participation over withdrawal, dialogue over cynicism, and civic responsibility over indifference.

That work continues.

A Little Humor



Your Help is needed

Volunteer with
MLI, join the

Donate to
support our
work



With a Little Help From Our Friends

Your support
strengthens
civics education

Council of
CivicChampions,
or
nominate a
teacher.

across
California. Every
contribution
makes a
difference.

Madison-Lincoln Initiative

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