

To the Incoming American Citizens of the United States,

First, I would like to say congratulations on officially becoming United States citizens. This is the best country in the world to live in. We have privileges, rights, and freedoms that you might not have experienced in your country. America is not perfect, but it is one of the only countries in the world that allows us, the citizens to make choices. I am glad I was born here where I have been able to grow up having these privileges.

One of the most important America has freedom. Many people in other countries don't have these opportunities. In this country you have the freedom to vote. You can vote for the President of the United States of America. You also have the right to vote for other state representatives. You choose who you think is the best person for the job because your vote counts. We also have freedom of religion. You have the right to practice whatever religion you are. You can go to your church, temple, mosque, or any other house of worship without fear for your life. We also have freedom of speech. This country is not a dictatorship. We can say what we want to say without fear. We have the right to make decisions for ourselves and for our families. We have the right to receive an education. We have the right to go to college, to earn a college degree so we can choose to work wherever we want in the United States. We have the privilege to live where we choose to live. We have beautiful lands and homes. From apartments, to houses to mansions. Depending on where you choose to live you see important monuments all around you that you can enjoy being a part of. For example, Sagamore Hill was the home of one of our Presidents of the United States, Theodore Roosevelt. You are free to visit his home and a national park named after him. You are free to go to the park down the road. You can play sports, walk in the park, fish, go to the beach, go for a boat ride, or just sit and read a book under a tree.

You also have the right of being who you are. Your race does not ban you from society. You are not separated from others. You can go to the same schools. Live with people who were born here. It does not matter where you are from you are not discriminated. You have the freedom to speak any language. We do not use race to define who an American is.

Most importantly, now that you are an American citizen, your children may be as well. They now have the same privileges as you and me. They can go to school like me, play a sport like me, even work. The best part of this is that as a citizen you make these choices.

Most Americans like me think we're the luckiest people in the world. I hope you think the same. Once again, congratulations on becoming a United States Citizen.

Good luck to you and your families.

Meghan Cox