

United States Marine Corps 250th Birthday Celebration
Governor Laura Kelly Remarks as Prepared – November 7, 2025

Good morning. It is my great honor to be here alongside Commandant William Koonce as we celebrate the 250th birthday of the United States Marine Corps.

I always welcome the opportunity to address so many of our state's esteemed military leaders.

As many of you know, I am the daughter of a career Army officer. I grew up on posts all over the country, as well as in Germany and in Japan. My father served in World War II and received the Purple Heart when he was wounded during the Korean Conflict.

I know that my father made many sacrifices to preserve our freedom and our democracy. I know the dedication and commitment required of military members and the perseverance and resilience required of their families.

My lived experience is, in part, why, since the start of my administration, I have prioritized policies that support Kansas military members and their families. Together, we have passed bipartisan legislation to make it easier for military spouses to transfer their professional licenses when relocating to Kansas; We've expanded workforce programs that connect veterans with career opportunities in Kansas; and we continue to invest in infrastructure and partnerships that strengthen our military installations and the communities they support.

We owe a debt of gratitude to our servicemembers for the sacrifices they make every single day for a cause greater than themselves.

One of the core values of the United States Marine Corps is finding individual purpose in a collective cause.

Kansas has a long history of selfless individuals who have dedicated their lives to the collective cause of protecting our nation and advancing its ideals.

One in particular is the former Senator from Kansas Pat Roberts. Senator Roberts has a Walk of Honor plaque dedicated to him on the Kansas State Capitol grounds.

Senator Roberts is a fourth-generation Kansan who rose to the rank of Captain in the United States Marine Corps. Following his time in the service, he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1980, representing Kansas' first congressional district. He was subsequently reelected an impressive seven times.

He was then elected to the U.S. Senate in 1996, where he served four terms. He retired in 2021 as the only person to have chaired both the House and Senate Agriculture Committees.

During his time in public service, Senator Roberts worked in a bipartisan manner. As a result, he derived tremendous victories for veterans, for the agriculture industry, and for Kansans in every corner of our state – rural, suburban, and urban alike.

Senator Roberts represents the very best of Kansas. Senator Roberts is but one of many across our great state who have dedicated their lives to public service.

That's who we are as Kansans – we make sacrifices. We serve our communities. We answer calls much bigger than ourselves for the common good.

As we gather today to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the U.S. Marine Corps, I want to reaffirm my commitment as your Governor to making Kansas the best place for our servicemembers, our veterans, and their families to live and to work.

Thank you all again for allowing me to join you in celebrating this momentous day. Oorah!

With that, I will read the proclamation for the 250th Birthday of the United States Marine Corps.

To the people of Kansas, greetings.

Whereas, on November 10, 1775, the Continental Congress established the United States Marine Corps as a force dedicated to defending the freedoms and security of the fledgling nation; and

Whereas, for 250 years, the United States Marine Corps has answered the call to duty demonstrating courage, honor, and an unwavering commitment to the defense of the United States of America; and

Whereas, throughout its storied history, the Marines have stood as guardians of liberty and protectors of democracy, serving with distinction in every major conflict since the founding of our Nation – from the Revolutionary War to the present day; and

Whereas, the proud traditions of the Marine Corps – rooted in discipline, loyalty, and sacrifice – continue to inspire future generations of Americans to serve and to uphold the highest ideals of patriotism; and

Whereas, we honor the devotion of all who have worn the eagle, globe, and anchor, and we remember with reverence those Marines who gave the last full measure of devotion in defense of freedom; and

Whereas, on this historic 250th anniversary, we celebrate the enduring legacy of the United States Marine Corps and reaffirm our deep gratitude to all Marines – past, present, and future – for their valor, dedication, and steadfast service to our nation.

Now, therefore, I, Laura Kelly, Governor of the State of Kansas, do hereby proclaim November 10, 2025, as 250th Birthday of the United States Marine Corps in the state of Kansas and I urge all citizens to join in this observation.