



MESSAGE
FROM
PRESIDENT/
CEO

**RYAN
BARTLETT**

Celebrate America's Big Birthday and Co-op Principles

THIS YEAR IS a landmark birthday for our nation—250 years since the signing of the Declaration of Independence. As I reflect on why I'm proud to be an American, I'm reminded of why I'm also grateful to be a member of an electric cooperative. The U.S. and the electric co-ops that serve it have similarities in the principles we're governed by.

One membership, one vote. This simple edict describes a fundamental element of the way cooperatives operate and is one of the Seven Cooperative Principles—Democratic Member Control.

Our country's founding principles resound within your electric co-op's structure and election process. Each year, as part of Taylor Electric Cooperative's annual meeting, members get to vote on director candidates—your co-op decision-makers. We put the decision of who should serve on our board in your hands.

Representative democracy is crucial to the co-op way, which is deeply rooted in goodwill and equality and maintains an overarching vision that benefits us all. That's the cooperative difference.

Autonomy and Independence is another cooperative principle we hold dear at Taylor EC. We maintain our autonomy by only entering into agreements with organizations and raising capital under terms that ensure we carry out the vision and meet the needs of our members.

We honor the trust of our members through judicious use of funds and know that integrity rivals electricity as our most precious resource. Without the confidence of our membership, we cease to operate effectively.

Finally, as July 4 nears, consider the principle of Voluntary and Open Membership. Taylor EC is open to all, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination. Perhaps there is no higher or more patriotic tenet to uphold. In times of strife or discord, I look to these unifying principles for comfort and inspiration and as a reminder of all that unites us. Side by side with our members and neighbors, this Independence Day Taylor Electric honors our history and the spirit of cooperation that conceived this great nation.

