



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Foundation for the National Archives Joins Archives' July 4th Celebration,
Welcoming Thousands to Home of Declaration of Independence**

*John Hancock Financial, Dykema Gifts Support Dramatic Reading of Declaration,
Patriotic Program, Family Activities*

Washington, DC July 11, 2011 – The Foundation for the National Archives was proud to join its partners at the National Archives last Monday in presenting an exciting day of July 4th activities that drew thousands of visitors to the home of the original, official Declaration of Independence on its 235th anniversary.

The annual Independence Day festivities, which included patriotic music, a dramatic reading of the Declaration of Independence from the National Archives steps, and free family activities, were made possible in part by the generous support of lead sponsor John Hancock Financial as well as the Foundation's newest corporate sponsor, the national law firm of Dykema.

The National Archives' annual Independence Day celebration has become a favorite starting point for thousands of visitors descending on the National Mall to celebrate July 4th. Veteran news broadcaster John Palmer served as this year's emcee, and Archivist of the United States David S. Ferriero entertained the crowd with a humorous recitation of the journey the Declaration of Independence took en route to its rightful place beside the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights in the National Archives' Rotunda for the Charters of Freedom.

The Honorable Royce C. Lamberth, Chief Judge of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, delivered the keynote address. Washington Capitals player Jeff Schultz and Gregory McCarthy, vice president for government and municipal affairs for the Washington Nationals, joined historical reenactors Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, and Ned Hector in a dramatic reading of the Declaration of Independence, with a boisterous crowd voicing the outrage of the colonists by booing as the grievances against King George III were read and cheering the Founding Fathers' historic declaration.

Musical entertainment was provided by the U.S. Army 3rd Infantry “The Old Guard” Fife and Drum Corps, while soprano Michelle B. Johnson sang *The National Anthem* and *America the Beautiful*.

The public program followed the Foundation’s annual *Promise of America* breakfast at the National Archives, sponsored by John Hancock Financial for the 7th year in a row. Outside the Archives, many visitors stood in line for a chance to kick off their July 4th celebration by signing a facsimile of the Declaration of Independence.

The public program was followed by the National Independence Day Parade on Constitution Avenue along the National Mall. The first float in the parade featured the National Archives Experience’s latest exhibition in the Archives’ Lawrence F. O’Brien Gallery, “What’s Cooking, Uncle Sam?” with Archivist of the United States David S. Ferriero, wearing a chef’s apron, waving beside the exhibition’s Chief Culinary Advisor José Andrés and Andrés’s three daughters. In a unique partnership with the Foundation, Andrés’s ThinkFoodGroup also supported “What’s Cooking?” by opening a temporary new restaurant, the America Eats Tavern, near the Archives on July 4th.

Several members of Congress and the Foundation’s Board joined Foundation Chairman and President Ken Lore and sponsors Tom Samoluk of John Hancock Financial and Steve Zimmerman of Dykema to participate in the Independence Day program. Special guests included U.S. Reps. Joseph Courtney (D-CT), John Larson (D-CT), Michael Turner (R-OH), and Betty Sutton (D-OH); along with Foundation Board members A’Lelia Bundles, Governor Frank Keating, Cokie Roberts, and Deborah Ratner Salzberg; FCC Chairman Julius Genachowski; Phil Schiliro, special advisor to President Obama; Rachel Goslins, executive director of the President’s Committee on the Arts and Humanities; and Minister Deanna Horton, Canadian Ambassador to Vietnam.

“This is the 7th year that John Hancock Financial has served as the corporate sponsor of the *Promise of America* breakfast and we are pleased national law firm of Dykema has chosen to support our Foundation,” Lore said during a morning program in the National Archives’ Rotunda. “We are thrilled to have your support as we celebrate our Nation’s independence at the National Archives, the home of the Declaration.”

“John Hancock Financial was pleased to be able to support the National Archives and its Independence Day celebration again this year,” said Tom Samoluk, Vice President, John Hancock Financial. “The National Archives does a wonderful job with the festivities and in general to foster interest and learning about our country’s heritage.”

“Dykema is proud to have partnered with the Foundation for the National Archives and John Hancock Financial in honor of our great nation on the

anniversary of its independence at this year's National Archives event," said attorney Paul Laurenza, Managing Member of Dykema's Washington D.C. office. "We further salute the Foundation's mission to collaborate with the National Archives, enabling visitors to interact with our nation's history—the founding of democracy—through education and appreciation of our national heritage."

About the Foundation for the National Archives

The Foundation for the National Archives is an independent nonprofit that serves as the National Archives' private-sector partner in the creation of and ongoing support of the National Archives Experience, which includes permanent exhibits, educational programs, traveling exhibits, special events and film screenings, educational literature, and historical/records-related products and media. The Foundation helps the public understand the importance of the holdings of the National Archives by presenting the depth and diversity of the records through award-winning, interactive educational exhibits and programs. It generates financial and creative support for the National Archives Experience from individuals, foundations, and corporations who share a belief in the importance of innovative civics education.

About the National Archives Experience

The National Archives Experience, created by the National Archives in partnership with the Foundation for the National Archives, has transformed the visitor experience at the National Archives' Washington, DC building, and includes a renovated Rotunda for the Charters of Freedom, the award-winning Public Vaults permanent interactive exhibition, the William G. McGowan Theater, the Lawrence F. O'Brien Gallery for special exhibits, the Boeing Learning Center, and the Digital Vaults online exhibit. These components make the rich resources of the National Archives accessible to Americans nationwide.

About John Hancock Financial

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About Dykema

Dykema is a leading national law firm, serving business entities worldwide on a wide range of complex business issues. Dykema lawyers and other professionals in 10 U.S. offices work in close partnership with clients – from start-ups to Fortune 100 companies – to deliver outstanding results, unparalleled service and exceptional value in every engagement. To learn more, visit www.dykema.com.

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