



# 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Fairfax Resolves July 18, 2024



## What are the Fairfax Resolves?

The Fairfax Resolves were a series of resolutions adopted by 25 signers at the Fairfax County Courthouse in Alexandria, VA, on July 18, 1774. The Fairfax Resolves were authored primarily by George Mason at a meeting chaired by George Washington. They were one of the first significant documents to systematically define the constitutional rights of the colonies. The resolves called for a Congress of the colonies and the formation of a Continental Association to implement trade sanctions against Great Britain. They influenced the Declaration of Independence and U.S. Bill of Rights. Select key documents that defined our nation are shown below.

Document	Primary Author	Written	Ratified	Significance
The Fairfax Resolves	George Mason	July 1774	7/18/1774	Meeting led by George Washington to "define our Constitutional Rights."
Virginia Declaration of Rights	George Mason	May 1776	6/29/1776	Power is derived from the people, no taxation without consent of governed
United States Declaration of Independence	Thomas Jefferson and the Committee of Five	June 1776	7/4/1776	Rights to life, liberty and happiness from Virginia Declaration of Rights
Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union	Second Constitutional Convention	Nov. 1777	2/2/1781	Established the central Government
United States Constitution	Philadelphia Convention	Sep. 1787	6/21/1787	Chaired by George Washington
United States Bill of Rights	James Madison	Sep. 1789	12/15/1791	Borrowed from and based on the Virginia Declaration of Rights

## Significance of the Fairfax Resolves

*"The Fairfax Resolves were the strongest documented stand against British oppression up to this time in America. George Washington carried the Fairfax Resolves to Williamsburg in August 1774, and from there to the First Continental Congress in Philadelphia, where they influenced the formation of the Continental Association of October 20th, 1774."*

- George Mason, the Fairfax County Resolves and the American Revolution, Fletcher Shaw, 1982

*"Among the most direct influences on the men who adopted the Continental Association were the Fairfax Resolves."*

- In the Common Cause: American Response to the Coercive Acts of 1774, David Ammerman, 1974, p. 86.

*"The Fairfax Resolves were the most detailed, the most influential and the most radical."*

- George Mason, Forgotten Founder, Jeff Broadwater, 2006, p. 67

## 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Fairfax Resolves

The Fairfax Resolves chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) is working with Alexandria and Fairfax governments and historic associations to commemorate the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Fairfax Resolves with three days of planned activities, from July 18-20, 2024. It is anticipated that hundreds of SAR, DAR and CAR members and others from around the nation will descend on the region for this once in a lifetime celebration.

The Fairfax Resolves SAR chapter is also committed to placing a plaque at the gravesite of each of the original 25 signers of the Fairfax Resolves.

For more information, or to support this effort through the 1774 Society of the chapter, please contact Jeff Thomas at [jthomas4sar@gmail.com](mailto:jthomas4sar@gmail.com).

