

I want to first direct my comments to the people of New Hampshire.

Some are questioning why I am here.

I am here because New Hampshire is one of the 50 states and one of the original 13.

We hold the first in the national primary and we have a proud tradition of civic participation and responsibility.

It was the people of New Hampshire who heard the call of Paul Revere and participated in the first overt act of independence in the revolution that led to Lexington and Concord that resulted in the Battle of Bunker Hill where more than half of the citizen soldiers came from New Hampshire.

These acts lead to the formation of our country.

Just 25 miles north of here, on June 21, 1788, it was New Hampshire delegates who voted to ratify the constitution and on that day – upon that vote – we became the United States of America.

New Hampshire people are not accustomed to walking away or stepping down from a civic duty – and I will not either.

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Turning to the Commission members and those of you who are here from other parts of the country, I welcome you to the campus of St. Anselm College in the Granite State of New Hampshire – whose motto is ‘Live Free or Die’.

In order to live free we must have a stable election process to keep the confidence of our citizens. This, in a nutshell, is the reason why this commission was established. It has faced continual opposition since its inception. Although our work is only really beginning today and no findings or conclusions have been reached or announced, the spector of extreme political partisanship already threatens our ability to reach a consensus.

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Let us therefore examine the historical voter turnout record.

Let us agree to go forward in an open and candid way.

Let us not be afraid to search for the truth.

Let us help make our election procedures reasonably easy for every eligible voter, while maintaining a process worthy of the voters’ confidence.

And let that process begin today.