

A letter to concerned Americans from Howard Schultz,
ceo of Starbucks Coffee Company



July 2012

HOW CAN AMERICA WIN THIS ELECTION?

On Independence Day, our country celebrates the promise of America.

It's a day to remember that the principles that bind us together vastly outweigh what keeps us apart. The freedom to dream and the opportunity to create a better life—not just for ourselves, but for each other—have always defined our great nation.

I am a product of that American Dream. As a kid who grew up in public housing, went on to get an education at a state university and build a business, I am grateful for what this country has made possible for me. In turn, at Starbucks, we have always tried our best to honor our responsibility to the communities we serve.

And on this Fourth of July, our communities need all of us.

Across the country, millions of Americans are out of work. Many more are working tirelessly yet still unable to adequately care for their families. Our veterans are not being welcomed home with the level of support they deserve. Meanwhile, in our nation's capital, our elected leaders are continuing to put ideology over real solutions. I love America, but we all know there is something wrong. The deficits this country must reconcile are much more than financial, and our inability to solve our own problems is sapping our national spirit. We are better than this. America's history has showed that we have accomplished extraordinary things when we act collectively, with courage, creativity, and generosity of spirit—especially during trying times.

As we celebrate all that is great about our country, let's come together and amplify our voices.

Let's tell our government leaders to put partisanship aside and to speak truthfully about the challenges we face. Let's ask our business leaders to create more job opportunities for the American economy. And as citizens, let's all get more involved. Please, don't be a bystander. Understand that we have a shared responsibility in solving our nation's problems. We can't wait for Washington.

At Starbucks, we are trying to live up to our responsibility by increasing our local community service and helping to finance small-business job creation with Create Jobs for USA. Our company is far from perfect, and we know we can do more for America. But we need your help. We need your voice.

Join the national conversation with #INDIVISIBLE. Starting today, I invite you to share your view of America, and how we can all put citizenship over partisanship. On Instagram, post a photo of the America we all need to see. On Twitter, provide a link to an innovative idea. Blog about who's making a difference in your community; or on YouTube, share how you made your American Dream come true. No matter where you post, if you use the tag #INDIVISIBLE, Starbucks will do its part to collect and amplify your voices.

To spark the conversation in our stores, your local Starbucks will proudly serve everyone a free tall hot brewed coffee on the Fourth of July.

Together, we can set a new tone in America. We hope you agree that doing so is a powerful way to celebrate our nation's birthday.

In 2012, America needs to win the election more than either party does. It is time now to join together as Americans. It is time, whatever our differences, for us to strive and succeed as one nation—indivisible.

With great respect,

chief executive officer, Starbucks Coffee Company

