



North Dakota House of Representatives

State Capitol
600 East Boulevard Avenue
Bismarck, ND 58505-0360

Representative
Josh Boschee
District 44
517 First Street North
Fargo, ND 58102-4540
C: 701-367-3513
jboschee@nd.gov
Minority Leader

January 22, 2020

HB 1285 Testimony House Government and Veterans Affairs Committee

Good morning Chair Kasper and members of the GVA Committee.

HB 1285 is enacting legislation to create a North Dakota specific America 250 Commission, to commemorate the 250 years since America's founding. Congress established a national America 250 Commission in 2016, who briefed former Vice President Pence of their work last January.

Attached is a letter I, and other legislative leaders received in early March of 2020 encouraging North Dakota to plan our own events for our nation's 250th anniversary in 2026. In all honestly, I didn't pay much attention to the letter as we were just starting to aggressively address issues related to COVID-19 in state. Fortunately, a north Fargo neighbor of mine, Sandy Sidler, serves as a regent for the ND State Society Daughters of the American Revolution and reached out to me this past fall to see if North Dakota could get a Commission started. You will hear from her shortly and have likely received written testimony from her and other members of the organization which has chapters throughout North Dakota.

While, there are still five years until our nation's 250th anniversary, enacting a Commission in the coming biennium will allow the Commission to begin the early work of laying the foundation for how cities, townships, school districts, Veterans groups, businesses and nonprofits throughout the state can be a part of much more in depth planning during the 2023-25 biennium to implement at least a year's worth of commemoration between July 2025 and July 2026.

As you see in section 1 of the bill, a comprehensive list of state agencies, policy makers and statewide nonprofits are being invited to provide leadership on the Commission to ensure it is as comprehensive as possible. In consultation with the state historical society, several of these entities were a part of the planning of our state's 125th Anniversary leading up to 2014 celebration.

Section 2 provides the powers and duties of the Commission. Subsection 2 of Section 2 allows the Commission to fundraise and receive funds from various entities to diversity funding sources. It is anticipated that the national America 250 Commission may have resources from Congress to help support state efforts, in addition to anything provided by private foundations, nonprofits, individuals, corporations and government entities. The attached fiscal note, prepared by the state historical society, requests \$25,000 in General Fund spending to begin the Commission's work over the next biennium.

Without a fundraising or development plan in place, for the purposes of the fiscal note, \$500,000 in General Fund spending, is identified to receive an equal amount from Congress. As the development plan and more details are provided by the national America 250 Commission, the state Commission will be able to provide a more accurate request for the 23-25 biennium inclusive of expected non-General Fund dollars to offset General Fund impact.

Subsection 4 of Section 2 lays out some of the overarching duties of the Commission. The bill is drafted with a few specifics including identifying locations in the state to display the, very heavy, replica of the liberty bell the state historical society has in it's collection and placement of a permanent plaque, provided by the State Society Daughters of the American Revolution, at a designated location in the state.

Attached to my testimony, are examples of how other states have already enacted their initial plans for their state's America 250 Commission.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, the creation of a North Dakota specific America 250 Commission will allow us to tell the story of North Dakota over the past 250 years. As our nation prepares to celebrate 250 years of democracy, we will be able to make significant contributions to those discussions in every corner of the state. School districts may have bolstered civics and history curriculum, communities may have one time or ongoing discussion of what being an American means to them, traveling exhibits may meander throughout the state to provide more North Dakotans an opportunity to learn and reflect and most importantly, we, as a state will be able to reaffirm our commitment to democracy, civil discourse and the opportunity for freedom for all.

I appreciate the committee's consideration of this legislation and hope that you can assist in developing a solution.

I will try my best to answer any questions committee members may have.

FISCAL NOTE
Requested by Legislative Council
01/11/2021

Bill/Resolution No.: HB 1285

- 1 A. **State fiscal effect:** *Identify the state fiscal effect and the fiscal effect on agency appropriations compared to funding levels and appropriations anticipated under current law.*

	2019-2021 Biennium		2021-2023 Biennium		2023-2025 Biennium	
	General Fund	Other Funds	General Fund	Other Funds	General Fund	Other Funds
Revenues	\$0	\$0				\$500,000
Expenditures	\$0	\$0	\$25,000		\$500,000	\$500,000
Appropriations	\$0	\$0	\$25,000		\$500,000	\$500,000

- 1 B. **County, city, school district and township fiscal effect:** *Identify the fiscal effect on the appropriate political subdivision.*

	2019-2021 Biennium	2021-2023 Biennium	2023-2025 Biennium
Counties	\$0	\$0	\$0
Cities	\$0	\$0	\$0
School Districts	\$0	\$0	\$0
Townships	\$0	\$0	\$0

- 2 A. **Bill and fiscal impact summary:** *Provide a brief summary of the measure, including description of the provisions having fiscal impact (limited to 300 characters).*

21-23 biennium is the planning of the 250th end of the Revolutionary war. These funds will be used to plan and implement the committee. 23-25 Expected to receive \$500K in federal revenues matched at 50% state general funds for events and exhibits relating to America 250.

- B. **Fiscal impact sections:** *Identify and provide a brief description of the sections of the measure which have fiscal impact. Include any assumptions and comments relevant to the analysis.*

All 50 states are putting together commissions to look at the US in its 250th birthday. The commission will need funding to support those efforts and facilitate programs, exhibits, educational initiatives throughout the State. We expect federal support to match state funds.

3. **State fiscal effect detail:** *For information shown under state fiscal effect in 1A, please:*

- A. **Revenues:** *Explain the revenue amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each revenue type and fund affected and any amounts included in the executive budget.*

\$500,000 We expect federal grant funds to be available for this commemoration. There may even be other grant sources available as it is expected that is is a nationwide series of events happening throughout 2026.

- B. **Expenditures:** *Explain the expenditure amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each agency, line item, and fund affected and the number of FTE positions affected.*

21-23 \$25,000 appropriations for the commission to meet and function and host meetings and planning sessions. Expenditures would relate the committee work. 23-25 \$250000 per year. We expect to that funds would be spent throughout the state on the creation of exhibits, events, festivals, seminars, symposia, etc that explore the America at 250. conceptually similar to the 1976 bicentennial or 125th anniversary of statehood, this will be a chance for communities across the state to have events relating to the 250th. We expect most of these funds will be matched in local and federal grants.

C. **Appropriations:** *Explain the appropriation amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each agency and fund affected. Explain the relationship between the amounts shown for expenditures and appropriations. Indicate whether the appropriation or a part of the appropriation is included in the executive budget or relates to a continuing appropriation.*

\$500,000 We are anticipating federal funding for much of this commemoration. However, we estimate that there will be some cost to ND for partaking in the national commemoration of the 250th years since 1776. \$25K in 2021-23 for planning and organizational needs. In the next biennium 2023-2025 \$250K per year for the production of events. It does seem likely that this may become part of an executive budget. The projects will be completed in 2025-2027 biennium and there is no current estimate of what that amount may entail.

Name: Bill Peterson

Agency: State Historical Society

Telephone: 17013282724

Date Prepared: 01/13/2021

UNITED STATES SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL
COMMISSION

March 11, 2020

The Honorable Doug Burgum
Governor of North Dakota
Office of the Governor
600 East Boulevard Avenue
Bismarck, ND 58505-0001

The Honorable David Hogue
Office of the Senate President Pro Tempore
P.O. Box 1000
Minot, ND 58702-1000

The Honorable Lawrence Klemin
Office of the Speaker of the Assembly
3929 Valley Drive
Bismarck, ND 58503-1729

The Honorable Joan Heckaman
Office of the Senate Minority Leader
322 Second Avenue North
New Rockford, ND 58356-1712

The Honorable Josh Boschee
Office of the Assembly Minority Leader
517 First Street North
Fargo, ND 58102-4540

Dear North Dakota Leaders:

I have the honor of serving as Chairman of the U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission, which is the official government body established by Congress to prepare an overall program for commemorating the 250th anniversary of the United States.

The Commission is charged with planning and coordinating observances and activities associated with the 250th anniversary throughout the country. The Commission will be at the center of a network of federal, state, territorial, and local entities working together to make the 250th a once-in-a-lifetime experience for all Americans.

After a comprehensive 16-month strategic planning process, we completed our statutory requirement of submitting a Strategic Plan and Report to the President on December 31, 2019. On January 15, 2020, Vice President Pence invited members of the Commission to the White House to present an overview of our work along with a copy of the report.

This initiative, which will be referred to commonly as 'America 250', anticipates nearly 137,000 programs—the vast majority of which will be state- and territory-led initiatives resulting in billions of dollars in resources that will ripple through our local, state, territorial, and national economies. America 250 is organizing itself to support those state and territorial efforts.

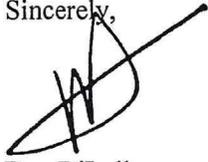
State- and territorial-level involvement is the Commission's top priority. Several states have created Semiquincentennial entities to administer and organize their 250th programming. We strongly encourage you to establish an entity so that we can begin to work with you in commemorating the 250th. We stand ready to provide our advice and support.

As referenced in the enabling legislation, I look forward to working with you to discuss America 250 and how we can coordinate in engaging nearly 350,000,000 of our fellow Americans in the largest event in our history.

Please contact me or Frank Giordano, Executive Director of the U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission, at fgiordano@america250.gov or 202-871-1776 to schedule a time when we can meet.

I look forward to working with you and your state on this historic undertaking.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dan DiLella', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Dan DiLella
Chairman, U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission
ddilella@america250.gov

AMERICA250

U.S. SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL COMMISSION
AMERICA 250 FOUNDATION

States' Acts Establishing Entities To Commemorate The 250th Anniversary of American Independence

Eight states have already established entities responsible for administering and organizing their individual commemorations of the 250th anniversary of our nation's independence.

The entities take one of two forms (or a hybrid of the two):

1. Direct an existing executive agency to plan, create, and administer the state's celebrations.
2. Create a new commission to plan, create, and administer the state's celebrations.

Legislation that established entities follows the brief summaries.

The national semiquincentennial commemoration is expected to include elements that increase emphasis on history education, particularly America's founding principles and documents, as well as preservation of, and visitation to historical parks and other cultural sites. The state entities which have been created emphasize the role of history education and tourism in their commemorations in varying degrees.

Kentucky

The Kentucky American Independence Semiquincentennial Commission was created through executive order. The commission is attached to the governor's office and serves as an advisory body to the Governor and the Secretary of Tourism, Arts, and Heritage Cabinet.

The commission consists of nine members:

- The Secretary of State
- The President of the Senate
- The Speaker of the House
- The Chair of the Historic Properties Commission
- The Chair of the Heritage Council
- The Secretary of Tourism, Arts, and Heritage Cabinet
- Three members appointed by the Governor

The Chair of the Commission is appointed by the Governor.

Michigan

The governor has tasked the Michigan History Center and the Historical Society of Michigan to prepare that state's commemoration of the 250th anniversary.

New Jersey

Enacted legislation in New Jersey directs the existing New Jersey Historical Commission to create a program to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the independence of the United States.

The legislation calls for the commission to enter into a contract with a [non-profit] private entity...to coordinate and plan the programs and observances of the State's semiquincentennial celebration" and calls for the establishment of an "advisory council" to support and guide the work of this public-private partnership, in part through fundraising assistance and promoting collaboration with state agencies.

New Jersey's bill also provides a \$500,000 annual appropriation to support semiquincentennial programs and staffing through June 30, 2028, \$200,000 of which is earmarked for the New Jersey Historical Commission, with the remaining \$300,000 to go to the state's selected non-profit partner.

North Carolina

The North Carolina USA 250th Committee was created through executive action. The committee is led by the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources and includes representatives from several public and private organizations.

Representatives from the following organizations are members of the committee:

- State chapters of the Society of Cincinnati, Sons of the American Revolution, Daughters of the American Revolution, and the Colonial Dames
- The North Carolina Museums Council and Federation of North Carolina Historical Societies
- Reenactor organizations
- The Division of State Historic Sites, the Division of State History Museums, and Tryon Palace
- The Historic Preservation Office, the Office of State Archaeology, and the Office of Historical Research and Publications
- Old Salem, Historic Bethania, Historic Murfreesboro, Historic Edenton, and Historic Hillsborough, and the Friends of the Moore's Creek Battlefield
- The land preservation community
- The North Carolina Commission on Indian Affairs and the North Carolina African American Heritage Commission
- The Blue Ridge National Heritage Area
- The Department of Public Instruction
- The State Library; and
- The National Park Service
- The North Carolina Humanities Council

Pennsylvania

Legislation in Pennsylvania created a new entity entitled the *Pennsylvania Commission for the United States Semiquincentennial*.

The legislation directs the new commission “to plan, encourage, develop and coordinate the commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States, Pennsylvania’s integral role in that event and the impact of its people on the nation’s past, present and future.”

Pennsylvania’s legislation specifies the size of its commission and who shall have authority to appoint commission members. The governor and certain legislative leaders have the power to make a specified number of appointments. The commission is to be comprised primarily of private citizens, along with several legislators, and ex-officio members primarily representing executive branch agencies.

The chairperson of the commission may hire staff for the commission.

The commission “may accept, use and dispose of gifts and donations of money, property or personal services... procure supplies, services and property...make contracts” and “expend...funds donated or received.”

South Carolina

Legislation in South Carolina created a new entity entitled the *South Carolina American Revolution Sestercentennial Commission*.

It vests in the commission the authority to “plan and execute...a proper observance of the Sestercentennial of the American Revolution in South Carolina, and in cooperation with the South Carolina Battleground Preservation Trust; a national organization, if any; and other similar commemorative organizations in other states.”

South Carolina’s legislation specifies the size of its commission and who shall have authority to appoint commission members. The governor and certain legislative leaders have the power to make a specified number of appointments. The commission is to be comprised of the Governor of South Carolina, the Chairman of the South Carolina Archives and History Commission, the Director of the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism, and individuals appointed by the governor and state legislative leaders.

The staff of the commission consists of the staffs of the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism and the South Carolina Department of Archives and History as well as other individuals hired by the commission.

Funding for the commission shall be determined and provided by the South Carolina General Assembly.

Tennessee

Legislation in Tennessee created a new entity entitled the *Tennessee Commission for the United States Semiquincentennial Commission*.

The legislation directs the commission to “plan, encourage, develop, and coordinate the commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States, and recognize Tennessee's integral role in that event and the impact of its people on the nation's past, present, and future.”

Tennessee’s legislation specifies the size of its commission and that it would consist of ex-officio members consisting of legislators, state officials, the president of the Tennessee Sons of the Revolution, and the state regent of the Tennessee Society, Daughters of the American Revolution.

The commission “may accept, use, and dispose of gifts and donations of money, property, or personal services... procure supplies, services, and property” and “expend...funds donated or received in pursuance of contracts.”

Virginia

Legislation in Virginia created a new entity entitled the *American Revolution 250 Commission* as an advisory body in the executive branch.

The legislation directs the new commission “formulate and implement a program for the inclusive observance of the 250th anniversary of the independence of the United States and the Revolutionary War in Virginia.”

Virginia’s legislation specifies the size of its commission at 22 members consisting of 17 citizens and five ex officio representatives. The governor has the authority to appoint 12 members derived from a list provided by two state history organizations, four history organizations designate one member each, the American Battlefield Trust designates one member, and the Virginia Bar Association designates one member.

The commission is required to create an advisory council, led by a commission member, composed of citizen members who have a knowledge of relevant history or expertise.

A chairman and vice chairman of the commission will be elected by the commission’s membership.

The commission “solicit, accept, use, and dispose of funds appropriated by the General Assembly and any gifts, grants, donations, bequests, or other funds received by the Commission for the purpose of aiding or facilitating its work.”

Contact: Shawn McBurney, smcburney@america250.org, (202) 478-3883