



TENNESSEE STATE MUSEUM

December 29, 2025

The Honorable Bill Lee
Governor
State Capitol, First Floor
600 Dr. Martin Luther King Blvd
Nashville, TN 37243

Dear Governor Lee,

On behalf of the Tennessee Commission for the United States Semiquincentennial, the Tennessee State Museum respectfully submits this report in accordance with Public Chapter 384, passed in 2019, relative to the Commission's accomplishments in 2025.

In 2025, the Tennessee 250th Commission continued its focus on activities for the Commission's overriding responsibilities:

- Plan, coordinate, and implement a program to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States in the year 2026, specifically highlighting the role of Tennessee and Tennesseans in and the events succeeding the historical event; and
- Coordinate with federal, state, and local agencies on infrastructural improvements and projects to welcome regional, national, and international tourists.

The Commission expresses its sincere thanks for funding inclusion in the administrative budget to support the plan and overall program for the commemoration. The statewide commemoration includes: educational programs; public programs including a community grant program and funding for exhibitions, publications, and events; digital and marketing support; and staffing to support these initiatives.

This year, the Commission began to implement the plans informed by listening sessions with Tennesseans. Some highlights from the past year include the following:

- Launched TN250.com and social media with Tennessee America 250 branding and content focused on supporting Tennessee sites and activities;
- Hired contract personnel to support the initiatives of the Commission;
- Launched educational resources to promote educational opportunities including the first Teacher Professional Development workshop held at Sycamore Shoals State Park;
- Supported opening night programming of the Wilson County-Tennessee State Fair;
- Supported the launch of Ken Burns' *American Revolution* documentary across Tennessee public television affiliates;

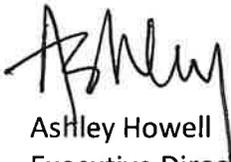
- Provide Tennessee America 250 information through presentations to government and civic groups including the TDEC Leadership Conference; Governor's Rural Opportunity Summit; Tennessee Main Street & Tennessee Downtown Programs; Keep Tennessee Beautiful; and private organizations;
- Launched the Semiquincentennial grant program to support historic preservation; archival preservation; programs; and community events. First Round decisions were made in October. The Second Round of applications will close in January 2026.

As of December 22, 2025, the Commission has expended **\$220,017** in these early preparations with an additional **\$1,566,323 encumbered** for signature programs and grant awards. Funds are currently in process for payment to support these state and local initiatives. A list of the first round of funding recipients is enclosed.

The Tennessee delegation is also participating in national planning meetings. In July, the national America 250 commission and the White House Task Force hosted a State and Territory Convening in Washington, D.C. A Tennessee delegation, including myself and the State Coordinator, attended the meeting, presented an update from Tennessee, and heard updates from national partners. The Commission is also involved with monthly updates and discussions with the America 250 Commission. All fifty states have commissions or committees related to the Semiquincentennial.

The Commission will continue to build on its momentum in 2026 to support the growing enthusiasm for the nation's Semiquincentennial. Thank you for your attention and support for America 250 in the year ahead.

Sincerely,



Ashley Howell

Executive Director, Tennessee State Museum

Chairman, Tennessee Commission on the United States Semiquincentennial

Enclosure

cc: The Honorable Randy McNally, Lt. Governor & Speaker of the Senate
The Honorable Cameron Sexton, Speaker of the House
Honorable Members, Tennessee General Assembly
Commission Members, Tennessee Commission on the United States Semiquincentennial