



TENNESSEE STATE MUSEUM

December 30, 2024

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

Dear Governor Lee,

This year, the administrative attachment of the Tennessee Commission for the United States Semiquincentennial transitioned from the Tennessee Department of Tourism to the Tennessee State Museum. On behalf of the Commission, the State Museum respectfully submits this report in accordance with Public Chapter 384, passed in 2019, relative to the Commission's accomplishments in 2024.

In 2024, 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 will include: 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 continued to engage with Tennesseans to further inform planning. Four listening sessions in all three Grand Divisions were held with more than 200 participants engaged to share and generate ideas and questions for the Commission regarding programming and grant opportunities.

Members of the Tennessee 250th Commission met to discuss and approve grant objectives and prepare for the launch of activities in 2025. In addition, the Commission has accomplished the following:

- Creation and approval of a Tennessee Commission logo;
- Creation and approval of “Voices and Volunteers” tagline;
- Engaged with a website designer to design a Tennessee America 250 website to launch in early 2025. The website will promote statewide activities and highlight the “stories, objects, landmarks, and places across our diverse state that define who we are as Tennesseans and Americans.” Grant opportunities will also be available through the website;
- Posting of support positions including a coordinator and paid internship positions;
- Coordination of educational resources to promote educational opportunities. Educational programs will launch through the website in 2025.

As of December 30, 2024, the Commission has expended \$17,390 in these early preparations.

In national coordination, a Tennessee delegation was asked to participate in national planning meetings. In July, the national America 250 commission hosted a State and Territory Convening in Washington, D.C. Chairman Ashley Howell attended the meeting, presented an update from Tennessee, and heard updates from national partners. In September, the Pennsylvania 250 Commission hosted a national meeting in Philadelphia. Vice-Chair Dr. Warren Dockter attended on behalf of the Tennessee Commission. The Commission is also involved with regular updates and discussions with the America 250 Commission and a roundtable of the states on America 250 that is convened by the American Association of State and Local History. As of this year, all 50 states have commissions or committees related to the Semiquincentennial.

The Commission will continue to build on its momentum in 2025 to support the growing enthusiasm for the nation’s Semiquincentennial.

Sincerely,



Ashley Howell

Executive Director, Tennessee State Museum

Chairman, Tennessee Commission on the United States Semiquincentennial

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