
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1793 Session of
2017

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WATSON, DEASY, CALTAGIRONE, KIRKLAND, BRADFORD, RADER AND
BURNS, SEPTEMBER 18, 2017

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON TOURISM AND RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT,
SEPTEMBER 18, 2017

AN ACT

1 Establishing the Pennsylvania Semiquincentennial Commission; and
2 providing for its powers and duties.

3 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
4 hereby enacts as follows:

5 Section 1. Short title.

6 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Pennsylvania
7 Semiquincentennial Commission Act.

8 Section 2. Definitions.

9 As used in this act, the following words and phrases shall
10 have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
11 context clearly indicates otherwise:

12 "Commission." The Pennsylvania Semiquincentennial Commission
13 established by this act.

14 "Pennsylvania pavilion." Pennsylvania's headquarters during
15 the Semiquincentennial that showcases the Commonwealth's

1 history, people, innovations, culture and resources.

2 "Secretary." The Secretary of Community and Economic
3 Development of the Commonwealth.

4 Section 3. Establishment.

5 The Pennsylvania Semiquincentennial Commission is established
6 to plan, encourage, develop and coordinate the commemoration of
7 the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States,
8 Pennsylvania's integral role in that event and the impact of its
9 people on the nation's past, present and future.

10 Section 4. Composition.

11 The commission shall consist of the following members:

12 (1) Two members of the Senate, of whom:

13 (i) One shall be appointed by the Majority Leader of
14 the Senate.

15 (ii) One shall be appointed by the Minority Leader
16 of the Senate.

17 (2) Two members of the House of Representatives, of
18 whom:

19 (i) One shall be appointed by the Speaker of the
20 House of Representatives.

21 (ii) One shall be appointed by the Minority Leader
22 of the House of Representatives.

23 (3) Twenty members who must be private citizens, of
24 whom:

25 (i) Four shall be appointed by the Governor.

26 (ii) Four shall be appointed by the Majority Leader
27 of the Senate.

28 (iii) Four shall be appointed by the Minority Leader
29 of the Senate.

30 (iv) Four shall be appointed by the Speaker of the

1 House of Representatives.

2 (v) Four shall be appointed by the Minority Leader
3 of the House of Representatives.

4 (vi) One of whom shall be designated by the Governor
5 as the Chairperson of the Pennsylvania Semiquincentennial
6 Commission.

7 (4) The following individuals shall be ex officio
8 nonvoting members of the commission:

9 (i) The secretary.

10 (ii) The Secretary of the Commonwealth.

11 (iii) The Attorney General.

12 (iv) The Auditor General.

13 (v) The Chair of the Pennsylvania Historical and
14 Museum Commission.

15 (vi) The Secretary of Transportation.

16 (vii) The Secretary of Education.

17 (viii) The Secretary of Conservation and Natural
18 Resources.

19 (ix) The Adjutant General.

20 (x) The Chair of the Pennsylvania Council on the
21 Arts.

22 Section 5. Term.

23 A member shall be appointed for the duration of the
24 commission. A vacancy on the commission shall not affect the
25 powers of the commission and shall be filled in the same manner
26 as the original appointment was made.

27 Section 6. Meetings.

28 Meetings of the commission shall be held throughout this
29 Commonwealth at times and locations determined by the
30 chairperson. A majority of the members of the commission shall

1 constitute a quorum but a lesser number of members may hold
2 hearings.

3 Section 7. General powers and duties.

4 The commission shall:

5 (1) Plan, coordinate and implement an overall program
6 commemorating the 250th anniversary of the founding of the
7 United States in the year 2026, specifically highlighting the
8 role of Pennsylvania and Pennsylvanians in and the events
9 succeeding the historic event.

10 (2) Plan, coordinate and implement the Pennsylvania
11 pavilion.

12 (3) Coordinate with all Federal, State and local
13 agencies on infrastructural improvements and projects to
14 welcome regional, national and international tourists.

15 Section 8. Requirements for plans and programs.

16 In preparing plans and an overall program, the commission:

17 (1) Shall give due consideration to related plans and
18 programs developed by Federal, other states, local and
19 private groups.

20 (2) May designate special committees with
21 representatives from groups described in paragraph (1) to
22 plan, develop and coordinate specific activities.

23 (3) Shall, beginning within 90 days of its first meeting
24 and throughout the duration of the commission, conduct
25 extensive public engagement throughout this Commonwealth in
26 developing the overall programs that may take place during
27 the Semiquincentennial.

28 (4) Shall aim to impact and showcase all counties in
29 this Commonwealth.

30 (5) Shall draw attention to the achievements, struggles,

1 honors, innovations and impacts of all people in Pennsylvania
2 since before its founding to the present day.

3 (6) Shall clearly delineate the costs associated with
4 the commission.

5 Section 9. Report to the Governor and the General Assembly.

6 (a) Duty to submit.--Not later than one year after the
7 effective date of this section, the commission shall submit to
8 the Governor and the General Assembly a comprehensive report
9 that includes the specific recommendations of the commission for
10 the commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the founding of
11 the United States and related events.

12 (b) Required contents.--The report shall include the
13 following:

14 (1) A detailed timeline of the plan of works through
15 2027.

16 (2) Recommendations of the commission for the allocation
17 of financial and administrative responsibility among the
18 public and private authorities and organizations recommended
19 for participation by the commission.

20 (3) The projected number of jobs created through the
21 implementation of the commission's plan and overall program.

22 (4) The projected economic impact of the implementation
23 of the commission's plan and overall program.

24 (5) The geographic impact on all counties of this
25 Commonwealth of the commission's plan and overall program.

26 (6) The plan for the Pennsylvania pavilion.

27 (7) The plan for improvements, if any, to the
28 infrastructure of the Commonwealth necessary for the
29 successful delivery of the commission's plan and overall
30 program.

1 (8) Outputs and outcomes against which progress and
2 success of the commission's plan and overall program can be
3 measured.

4 (c) Recommendations for legislation.--The report may include
5 recommendations for legislation needed to effectuate the plan
6 and overall program.

7 (d) Publication.--The report shall be available on the
8 commission's publicly accessible Internet website.

9 Section 10. Information from State agencies.

10 The commission may secure directly from a State agency
11 information as the commission considers necessary to carry out
12 this act. On the request of the chairperson of the commission,
13 the head of a State agency shall provide the information to the
14 commission.

15 Section 11. Gifts.

16 The commission may accept, use and dispose of gifts and
17 donations of money, property or personal services. Information
18 relating to the gifts shall be enumerated and submitted to the
19 State Ethics Commission each quarter and shall be available on
20 the commission's publicly accessible Internet website.

21 Section 12. Additional powers.

22 As determined necessary by the commission, the commission
23 may:

24 (1) Procure supplies, services and property.

25 (2) Make contracts.

26 (3) Expend, in furtherance of this act, funds donated or
27 received in pursuance of contracts entered into under this
28 act.

29 (4) Take actions as are necessary to enable the
30 commission to carry out efficiently and in the public

1 interest the purpose of this act.

2 Section 13. Property.

3 Property acquired by the commission that remains after the
4 termination of the commission may be designated by an act of the
5 General Assembly to local municipalities or State agencies.

6 Section 14. Administration.

7 (a) Compensation of members.--

8 (1) The members of the commission shall receive no
9 compensation for service on the commission.

10 (2) The members of the commission shall receive
11 reimbursement for reasonable travel expenses.

12 (b) Staff.--

13 (1) The chairperson of the commission may, without
14 regard to the civil service laws or regulations, appoint and
15 terminate an executive director and other additional
16 personnel as are necessary to enable the commission to
17 perform its powers and duties.

18 (2) The employment of an executive director shall be
19 subject to confirmation by majority vote of the commission.

20 Section 15. Annual report.

21 Once each year during the period beginning on the effective
22 date of this section through December 31, 2027, the commission
23 shall submit to the Governor and the General Assembly a report
24 of the activities of the commission, including an accounting of
25 funds received and expended during the year covered by the
26 report, the outputs and outcomes achieved and whether those
27 achievements meet the commission's plan and overall program. The
28 report shall be available on the commission's publicly
29 accessible Internet website.

30 Section 16. Termination of commission.

1 The commission shall terminate on December 31, 2027.

2 Section 17. Effective date.

3 This act shall take effect in 60 days.