

PLANNING AMERICA'S 250th ANNIVERSARY | JULY 4, 2026



ANNUAL REPORT

REPORT TO THE U.S. CONGRESS

**SUBMITTED BY
THE U.S. SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL COMMISSION
APRIL 2023**



STATEMENT FROM THE CHAIR

April 7, 2023

I am pleased to provide this progress report for 2022 on behalf of America250, also known as the U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission (the “Commission”). Since my presidential appointment as Chair of the Commission last July, we have stepped back and reimagined the role of the Commission and its supporting America250 Foundation (together “America250”) in planning and executing the largest, most inclusive commemoration of our nation’s founding. The attached brief report describes the significant actions that have been taken to “reset” and reinvigorate the Commission to its original mandates contained in the United States Semiquincentennial Act of 2016, as well as the vision for our path forward.

Much of my attention has been two-fold: 1) align the Commissioners and our internal functions with our relevant stakeholders to reflect our collective planning efforts, and 2) prepare for a major campaign to bring awareness to the American public of this historic milestone and engage them to participate in our journey to July 4, 2026. Consistent with the 2019 Strategic Plan laid out by the Commission as contained in the first Annual Report to the President in December 2019, the America250 staff are now focused on building awareness and visibility, expanding our Caucus members of Congress, and being conscientious stewards of America250’s appropriated and private funding. Our fiscal responsibility includes advocating for federal funding and committing to matching our appropriations with private funding and in-kind contributions as we aggressively manage our operating and recurring expenses. Most importantly, we will redouble the Commission’s focus on executing the spirit and intent of the original Act of Congress. We will continue to make decisions to serve the American people, which will require America250 to be a nimble, lean, execution-focused organization, as time is not on our side – and there will be more changes to ensure we are best positioned to serve the American people.

It is hard to believe that I have passed my five-year anniversary as a Commissioner since my original appointment by Senator Schumer, with just over three-and-a-half years left until July 4, 2026. Much has been accomplished, but we still have a long road ahead. I will continue to serve the American public faithfully as I did during my eight years as Treasurer of the United States under the Obama administration, along with both the Obama and Biden Treasury Transition Teams. We will continue to create the enthusiasm and momentum required nationally to execute a 250th anniversary worthy of the American people. The transformation required to be an organization equal to our aspirations has been significant, with much more work ahead. I look forward to working closely with the Commission to fulfill our critical mission to the American people.

Sincerely,

Rosie Rios

Chair of the United States Semiquincentennial Commission

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I. Executive Summary

2023 is a pivotal year for the U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission. With merely three-and-a-half years until July 4, 2026, it is imperative that clear, simple goals guide the planning in the time remaining. With a change in leadership at America250 in July 2022 came a refocusing of the Commission's goals and objectives. In short, the Commission is laser-focused on achieving the goals laid out clearly in the original Act (HR 114-196) (see Appx. A) as signed into law by President Obama in June 2016. On July 4 of this year, we will launch "*America's Invitation*," our public engagement process inviting all Americans to participate in both the design and execution of the 250th anniversary. The process will help the Commission ultimately create The Playbook of events, projects, and programs that are "local" to States and communities in tone and participation, along with national signature programs that promote reflection, unity, and inspiration across America.

In this report, we will summarize the history of the Commission and the challenges facing America250, but more importantly, we will provide a window into the vibrant current state and the exciting vision we are actively implementing during the coming months culminating with America's Invitation, which was approved by the full Commission at its recent meeting.

We believe that over the next three years support from the White House will be crucial in ensuring *the broadest and most inclusive commemoration in our nation's history*. In particular, the White House's ongoing public support and endorsement of America250 can significantly raise awareness of the upcoming milestone for all Americans. I ask that this include an Executive Order in tandem with the launch of America's Invitation directing all Federal agencies to develop their own America250 events and programs, consideration and support from the White House for the Federal funding essential to our planning, and critical engagement by the President, First Lady, Vice President, Second Gentleman, and their predecessors in promoting and participating in events and awareness efforts.

II. Background: Where we have been

The Act establishing the U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission provided for the appointment of a bipartisan Commission of 24 members along with 11 *ex officio* members (see Appx. B). The full complement of appointed Commissioners was completed in February 2018, and the original Commission Chair, Daniel DiLella, was appointed by President Trump in April 2018. Chair DiLella informally convened the Commissioners in May 2018, and the first official meeting of the Commission occurred in Philadelphia in November 2018. At that meeting, the Commissioners reached a consensus on the need to develop a strategic plan to guide the Commission's work through 2026. The Commissioners participated in a comprehensive planning process throughout 2019, co-led by then-Commissioner Rosie Rios and Dr. Anthony Rucci, an independent Emeritus Professor from Ohio State University. The Commissioners' strategy work culminated in the December 2019 first Annual Report to the President. The report outlined four broad strategic priorities, which remain paramount:

- Create an engaging and inspirational vision for America250 among each and every American,
- Build relationships and secure valued partners and stakeholders,
- Be comprehensive in scope and both national and local in impact, and

- Ensure excellence in the execution of America250 to provide effective, ethical, and transparent stewardship.

These four broad strategic priorities continue to guide the work of the Commission today, although the emphasis on public engagement in the planning and design process has increased significantly. The Commission has routinely convened since November 2018, including meeting virtually through the depths of the coronavirus pandemic in 2020 and 2021 (see Appx. C).

The original Act also provided for the identification and selection of an Administrative Secretariat by the Secretary of the Interior. Following a national RFP process, the American Battlefield Trust (“Trust”) was selected as the Secretariat in April 2018. In June 2019, working with the Commission, the Trust recommended the creation of The America 250 Foundation, Inc. The primary rationale for establishing a foundation was to facilitate and enable significant development and fundraising efforts since the original Act explicitly stated that Federal funding appropriations would not be made available to the Commission, and that all funding would have to come from private sources. This mandate created a significant hurdle in the start-up stages of the Commission and proved to be a formidable handicap to the Commission’s early progress. Despite this obstacle, Chair DiLella, the Commission, and the Foundation have been able to raise over \$4 million in private funding since 2018. The Foundation is incorporated as a 501(c)(3) in Delaware, and since May 2020, the Foundation has effectively provided the administrative services originally being provided by the Trust.

The Commission has encountered a number of significant challenges since its establishment.

- *Funding*: Despite having raised \$4 million in private donations since 2018, the Commission has had to rely on petitioning Congress for annual funds beginning in FY 2019. Since then, the Commission has received Federal appropriations of \$500K in FY 2019, \$3.3 million in FY 2020, \$8.0 million in FY 2021, \$8.0 million in FY 2022, and \$15 million in the current FY 2023 (Appx. D presents the three-year trend in Commission budgets and expenses for FY 2022 and FY 2023, and a projected budget for FY 2024. Along with an already submitted request for a \$30 million Federal appropriation for FY 2024, Appendix D forecasts private fundraising and in-kind donations to match the \$30 million appropriation, and the overwhelming majority (80%) of the FY 2024 budget will be earmarked for Commission identified programs, partnerships, and events). The Commission deeply appreciates the support received thus far but recognizes that a compelling national commemoration in 2026 will require significant additional resources, both public and private.
- *Controversy within the Commission itself*: The Commissioners have often been at odds on the role and decision-making of the Commission in program planning and design efforts and a small handful have impeded the work of the Commission. This has resulted in significant difficulty in moving the strategic agenda forward, heightened the scrutiny of the Commission’s efforts and made private fundraising much more difficult. An independent, outside organizational advisor provided a report based on extensive interviews of over 20 Commissioners and staff to diagnose the dysfunctional dynamics amongst the Commissioners (see Appx. E). Based on that report, which included recommendations, we are moving proactively with the authorized Congressional appointing authorities to reconstitute the membership of the Commission to remove disruptive Commissioners and ensure a coalition of engaged, constructive citizens.

- *A civil lawsuit against the Foundation, the Commission, and the American Battlefield Trust:* In February 2022, four former Foundation employees filed a civil lawsuit in the District of Columbia alleging fraud, waste and abuse of Federal funds; pay discrimination under the D.C. Human Rights Act (DCHRA); discrimination, retaliation, and hostile work environment under the DCHRA; wrongful termination; negligence; and two Plaintiffs allege defamation *per se*. We deny all allegations and motions to dismiss the lawsuit are pending before the Court. In addition, we engage an outside firm to conduct an independent investigation for an objective evaluation; the results of which did not substantiate the allegations (see Appx. F for an executive summary). It should also be noted that the Foundation has conducted annual audits as required by law through an independent accounting firm for FY 2020, FY 2021, and FY 2022. Each audit opinion stated, "...the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of America 250 Foundation."

Despite these challenges, the Commission has made significant progress since completing its strategic plan in 2019 (see Appx. I). Most notable milestones have included the following: creating the Congressional America250 Caucus, now numbering over 82 members; significant planning progress among the Federal *ex officio* agencies; establishing 32 State Commissions with numerous other States, territories and the District of Columbia under consideration; securing Federal funding; signing formal partnership agreements with dozens of non-profit and other organizations; and conducting multiple national surveys showing a robust level of enthusiasm among Americans for a meaningful commemoration of America's 250th anniversary. Those same surveys indicate that Americans want an inclusive effort and an acknowledgment of lessons learned from those periods in our history where we have fallen short of our core values as a nation.

III. Overview: Where we are today

America250 enters 2023 with a realigned structure and an invigorated commitment to its mission. The Foundation recently reorganized around a flattened structure designed to focus energies outward and quickly and efficiently scale its operations through professional services firms with national reach and a deep bench of expertise across the fields of public campaigns, strategic planning, marketing, communications, and public relations. These include a bipartisan coalition of national strategic and political communications firms, integrated strategy and marketing agencies, creative and website design, and research consultants. This professional services coalition, which includes two Democratic-leaning and two Republican-leaning firms, is working together to increase the visibility of America250. Our focus is on building support and momentum, media activations, and demonstrating the America250 value proposition to potential sponsors and partners through integrated marketing and branding campaigns.

Our activities are informed by ongoing market research, including a "town hall" style online caucus discussion of 115 registered engaged voters in December 2022, focus groups targeting key constituencies along political, socioeconomic, and demographic lines, and a recent, broad 2,000-person quantitative survey. This qualitative and quantitative research has provided additional insight into Americans' expectations of the Semiquincentennial, and a robust level of enthusiasm for a meaningful, unifying, and inclusive commemoration. These research results build on multi-year surveying that has been conducted and will provide a compelling baseline for messaging around the official launch of America's Invitation on July 4, 2023.

A vital part of all of this work is the re-establishment of the Commission's role in governance, decision-making, and planning authority. In advancing our critical mission, the America250 staff will continue to position the organization as "One America250" with the mutual goal of supporting the Commission through strategic alignment of roles and responsibilities. This ongoing process of realignment will further advance seamless coordination and collaboration between the Commission and Foundation staffs, as we continue to evolve into the agile, execution-focused organization, we must be to succeed in our mandate to the American people. We will continue to make decisions that best position the Commission in achieving its charge from the American people and Congress to orchestrate the largest, most inclusive anniversary in our nation's history.

Critical to our recent progress has been the much-needed infusion of a \$15 million Federal appropriation for FY 2023, enabling the national launch on July 4, 2023 (see Appx. D). We deeply appreciate this Congressional acknowledgment of both the need and importance of increased funding at this stage in our launch planning.

IV. Vision: Where we are headed

The launch of America's Invitation on July 4, 2023, has been referenced repeatedly and the following is a more detailed description of America250's major public engagement campaign for the Semiquincentennial. At the heart of America's Invitation is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for Americans across the country to share their unique stories, hopes, and dreams. This could include sharing an image, video, essay, song, or something of personal meaning that may be showcased on America250's website, social media, and at commemorative events. Americans could share something special from their community, whether a city or town, neighborhood, church, civic group, or individual family, to preserve their story for future generations. Americans will also be invited to share their thoughts on what they love about America, what they want to improve, and their hopes and dreams for the future. Together, the content shared with America250 will honor what makes America unique, help us learn more about each other, and capture a complete picture of America as it approaches the 250th anniversary of its founding. This will ensure America250 develops a commemoration of the people, for the people, and by the people — a commemoration that includes all of us.

The Commission is critically aware that time is drawing short to plan a monumental commemoration worthy of a 250th milestone and also of how vital it is to make decisions that are inclusive of the American people. America's Invitation will engage the American public in multiple ways so that the Commission can move swiftly and efficiently to develop a framework of activities that will eventually become the Playbook for the commemoration. The Playbook will identify projects and programs whereby the Commission will focus its support in three areas: what we can elevate, where we can partner, and what we can manage. The three components of America's Invitation will serve as the official notification and solicitation of feedback necessary for the Commission to begin the core work that has eluded us to date. America's Invitation will allow us to plan to mark the commemoration by saying, "Americans have spoken" as a bipartisan, all-partisan, non-partisan effort.

V. What we need from Congress

The Commission is committed to fulfilling the intent and spirit set forth in the U.S. Semiquincentennial Act in an extraordinary fashion. It seeks to always be a good steward of the public trust bestowed on the Commission and its Commissioners and to be aggressive and prudent in its responsibilities for managing the federal funding appropriated to it.

The Commission is grateful for Congress' support of the Commission both through the work of the appointed Members of Congress who serve as Commissioners and the funding support the Commission has received annually beginning in FY 2019.

As we approach 2026, it is imperative that Congress continue to support the Commission through providing adequate funding to support the requirements in its enabling legislation in order to support the development and execution of the largest, most inclusive commemoration of our nation's founding.

The Commission will need even further support from Congress in creating the enthusiasm and momentum required nationally to execute a 250th anniversary worthy of the American people. Individual members can be of assistance by joining the Congressional America250 Caucus, and, for those states that do not currently have a state commission, calling on state legislatures and governors to prioritize that process. Finally, the Commission hopes to call on members of Congress to attend and support upcoming events at the national, state, and local levels to share the message and mission of America250 with their constituents.

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Appendix A – Legislative History

The U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission Act was introduced in the House of Representatives by former Representative Pat Meehan from Pennsylvania and referred to the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. It was considered and approved on the House Floor under suspension of the Rules on July 5, 2016, and subsequently approved by unanimous consent on July 12, 2016. The bill was sent to President Barack Obama and was signed into Public Law on July 22, 2016. (Public Law 114-196 (130 Stat. 685)).

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/4875/all-actions?overview=closed#tabs>

Because of the need for some technical changes (adding *ex officio* members, recognizing the Commission's logo, and the desire for Federal funding), the U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission Amendments Act was introduced in the Senate by former Senator Pat Toomey of Pennsylvania and referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee. It was approved by the Committee and was passed by the Senate on July 21, 2020. Subsequently, the House approved the bill with some amendments with the approval by the Senate, and the bill was sent to President Donald Trump. It was signed into Public Law on December 31, 2022 (P.L. 116-282 (134 Stat. 3386)).

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/3989/all-actions?overview=closed&s=2&r=3&q=%7B%22search%22%3A%5B%22Semiquincentennial+toomey%22%5D%7D#tabs>

Appendix B - Current and Past Appointments to the Commission

Current Public Sector Members (as of February 28, 2023)

Senator Jeanne Shaheen of New Hampshire
Senate Vacancy (To be appointed by Senate Minority Leader McConnell)
Senate Vacancy (To be appointed by Senate Minority Leader McConnell)
Senate Vacancy (To be appointed by Senate Majority Leader Schumer)
Representative Robert Aderholt of Alabama
Representative Dwight Evans of Pennsylvania
Representative Maria Elvira Salazar of Florida
Representative Bonnie Watson Coleman of New Jersey

Current Private Sector Members (as of March 15, 2023)

The Hon. Robert A. Brady of Pennsylvania	Andrew Hohns, Ph.D. of Pennsylvania
Val Crofts of Wisconsin	Jim Koch of Massachusetts
The Hon. Joe Crowley of New York	Wilfred McClay, Ph.D. of Michigan
Daniel M. DiLella of Pennsylvania	Lucas Morel, Ph.D. of Virginia
Lynn Forney Young of Texas	Rosie Rios of California (Chair)
Cathy Gillespie of Virginia	James L. Swanson of Washington, D.C.
Noah Griffin, Jr. of California	Tom Walker, Jr. of Alabama
Vacancy (To be appointed by House Minority Leader Jeffries)	Vacancy (To be appointed by Senate Majority Leader Schumer)

Former Commissioners

Senator Robert Casey, Jr. of Pennsylvania
The Hon. David L. Cohen, Ambassador to Canada
Senator Tom Cotton of Arkansas
Amy Gutmann of Pennsylvania
Grant Hill of Florida
Representative George Holding of North Carolina
Representative Pat Meehan of Pennsylvania
Heather Murren of Nevada
Senator Pat Toomey of Pennsylvania
Richard Trumka of Maryland

The Act also called for Executive, Judicial and Legislative branches, and other governmental and nonprofit heads to serve as non-voting *ex officio* members of the Commission. Additional departments and Federal entities were added as *ex officio* members of the Commission with the passage of a technical amendment package, Public Law 116-282.

Current *ex officio* non-voting members of the Commission:

Department of the Interior	National Archives and Records Administration
Department of State	National Endowment for the Arts
Department of Justice	National Endowment for the Humanities
Department of Education	Library of Congress
Department of Defense	Institute of Museum and Library Services
United States Supreme Court	Smithsonian Institution

Appendix C – Commission Meetings List

<u>Date</u>	<u>Meeting Location/Highlights</u>
November 14-15, 2018	Independence Hall, Philadelphia, PA <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Inaugural meeting - Commissioners sworn-in with Commissioner Dan DiLella as Chairperson selected by President Donald Trump.
March 24-25, 2019	National Headquarters of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), Washington, D.C. <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Strategic Planning. Keynote address by the Honorable John Warner, former Administrator of the American Revolution Bicentennial Administration.
June 13-14, 2019	Union League Club of Philadelphia and Independence National Historical Park, Philadelphia, PA <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Commission's Committees begin to report and many stakeholders attend to begin creating the First Report to the President. Many breakout and working sessions were conducted.
September 15-16, 2019	Hilton Capitol Hill, Washington, D.C. <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Strategic planning sessions.
November 15, 2019	Teleconference call <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Commissioners approve all the governance documents of the Commission (Bylaws, Meeting Guidelines, Conflict of Interest Policy, and Travel and Reimbursement Policy). Frank Giordano was approved by the full Commission as the Executive Director.
March 24-25, 2020	The White House, Washington, D.C. <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Major presentations by the Planning and Historical Society Program Development Committee and the Marketing and Communications Committee.
June 18, 2020	Teleconference <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Reports from Committee Chairs and the America 250 Foundation's planning and program efforts.
November 20, 2020	Teleconference <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Special Presentation of National Signature Programs.
March 25, 2021	Teleconference <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Presentation of programs and events for July 4, 2021.
June 15, 2021	Teleconference <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Updates on all Commission Committees and a presentation from the America 250 Foundation.

- September 9, 2021 Teleconference
● Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Update.
- March 9, 2022 Teleconference
● Report and approval on changes to the governance documents and presentations on planning activities of the Foundation.
- June 7, 2022 Smithsonian Institution Building (The Castle), Washington, D.C.
● Retreat for Commissioners only.
- September 19, 2022 Museum on the American Revolution, Philadelphia, PA
● Commissioner Rosie Rios was selected by President Joe Biden as the Chairperson of the Commission in July. Chairperson Rios presents her vision on the direction of planning and programs for America250, and discussion on the organizational structure of the Commission and the Foundation. Reports were presented by *ex officio* members of the Commission.
- November 14, 2022 Smithsonian Museum of American History, Washington D.C.
● To strengthen the Commission’s Committee structure, the full Commission approves amendments to the Bylaws and Meeting Guidelines. Reports were presented by *ex officio* members of the Commission.
- March 27, 2023 United States Capitol, Washington, D.C.
● Approval of Committee charters, discussion and approval of America’s Invitation, reports from *ex officio* members and RevolutionNJ.

Appendix D - Public and Private Funding History

PUBLIC FUNDING

Beginning in FY 2019, the Commission has received annual Federal appropriations provided by Congress, and it seeks to continue to receive funds through the end of the Commission’s term on December 31, 2027. Federal funding received:

FY 2019	\$500,000	P.L. 116-6, enacted 2/15/19
FY 2020	\$3,300,000	P.L. 116-94, enacted 12/20/19
FY 2021	\$8,000,000	P.L. 116-260, enacted 12/27/20
FY 2022	\$8,000,000	P.L. 117-103, enacted 3/15/22
FY 2023	\$15,000,000	P.L. 117-328, enacted 12/29/22

PRIVATE FUNDING

Through the efforts of the former Chairperson of the Commission and its Executive Director, about \$2.1 million was raised from the private sector. Subsequently, an additional \$2 million was received by the America 250 Foundation in private donations.

For FY 2023 and all subsequent years, the Commission’s goal is to match all Federal funds with private sector contributions and in-kind support, and significantly increase funds earmarked for Commission identified programs, partnerships, and events.

FY 2022, FY 2023, and FY 2024 Budget Comparison

(\$ in millions)	FY 2022 Actual		FY 2023 Budget		FY 2024 Estimate	
	FY2022 Total	FY2022 %	FY2023 Total	FY2023 %	FY2024 Total	FY2024 %
Staff costs Salaries + benefits	\$6.113	54%	\$5.228	30%	\$4.100	7%
G&A Rent, IT, supplies	.628	6%	.943	5%	2.000	3%
Travel	.122	1%	.274	2%	.700	1%
Grants States/ partners	.040	<1%	.050	<1%	1.500	3%
Programs/ Profess. svc.	1.797	16%	7.611	43%	48.200	80%
Reserve Carry-over	2.600	23%	3.494	20%	3.500	6%
Total	\$11.300	100%	\$17.600	100%	\$60.000	100%



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March 28, 2023

US Semiquincentennial Commission Summary Report

Background

The US Semiquincentennial Commission, established in 2016 during Barack Obama’s presidency, is the Congressionally appointed body to promote and coordinate the US Semiquincentennial in 2026. The Commission is made up of an equal number of commissioners representing the Democratic and Republican parties, including elected officials, private citizens, and ex-officios of federal agencies representing the three branches of government. Commissioner Dan DiLella was appointed Chair of the Commission in 2018 and he served in this capacity until July 2022, when Commissioner Rosie Rios was appointed by President Biden to assume the role as Chair.

Since its near inception, noticeably from at least 2019 when the strategic plan was agreed to, there has been discord amongst some of the commissioners. There have been claims of dissatisfaction, accusations of inappropriate financial management, and claims of harassment at the America250 Foundation, the Commission’s nonprofit supporting organization. There has continued to be public airing in the press of some of the grievances expressed by a handful of commissioners, although an independent investigation and forensic accounting review found no wrongdoing. This critical commentary in the press has negatively impacted fundraising and public engagement in planning and preparing for the 250th commemoration of the United States. The Commission has approximately three more years left to plan.

My Engagement

I was contacted in April 2022 by the Commission upon the recommendation of a consultant familiar with the organization and my work. The level of discord was so great amongst the commissioners that meetings were bogged down in procedural issues and disruptions from a few commissioners. Chair Dan DiLella wanted to hold a retreat for the commissioners to clear the air and get back on track for the Commission to fulfill its mandate.

I was brought on as a third party, independent, conflict resolution practitioner to facilitate the one-day retreat in June 2022. The main purpose of the retreat was to provide a space for the commissioners to speak frankly about any concerns they had, to clear the air, and to develop a way forward so the Commission could fulfill its mandate. To prepare, I made available to all commissioners and selected ex-officios an opportunity to speak with me individually and confidentially to inform the needs



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assessment. The aim was to gain their perspectives to set the agenda for the retreat and to share the aggregated responses for transparency. I facilitated the retreat.

Retreat Key Findings

Some of the key findings of the interviews reflected that there was agreement on the mandate of the Commission and their role in fulfilling it. Most commissioners wanted to move forward focusing on the programming, were satisfied with the procedures, but not satisfied with the consistent disruptions by a few. Those referenced few commissioners complained about how the meetings were being run, the lack of fiscal transparency, and that they were so disturbed by the way this was being handled, they wanted the Commission to be dissolved. When this commentary was shared at the retreat some of the commissioners, especially the elected officials attending, were shocked that some commissioners expressed a desire for the Commission to be dissolved. Others explicitly expressed they did not want the Commission to fail.

The commissioners who attended the retreat, about 11, were able to engage in dialogue, air their concerns, and develop a plan for next steps. One issue that continued to be raised was from the handful of commissioners who wanted the Commission to be dissolved, and they were complaining about the way the bylaws were amended in March 2022. The reasons given for why they were amended with a silent vote is because of all the previous disturbances at the meetings that prevented the Commission from moving forward to discuss programming and other substantive matters. The manner in which it was done was top-down and offensive to some of the commissioners.

This seemed to be a sticking point for some and so in order to accommodate their concerns about how the bylaws were amended, it was agreed there would be another opportunity for the commissioners to review the bylaws, make recommendations for modifications by August 6th, and have another vote if necessary, at the September 2022 meeting. No one responded to the request for modifications between the June retreat, the August deadline, and the September meeting, so no vote was held at the September meeting. This was protested at the September meeting by the same few who took issue with the way the bylaws were amended in March, raised these concerns at the retreat in June, and did not take up the call to action offered to be completed by August in preparation for the September meeting.

This is but one example of how a complaint is raised, discussed, and actions to rectify the situation are offered, but not followed up, and then complained about again. It is a pattern on the part of a handful of commissioners who continue to obstruct the meeting proceedings with issues they have about the procedures being



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followed. They continue to ask for Robert's Rules of Order, which the Commission decided they were not going to adopt.

Key Findings and Patterns of Behavior

There are certain patterns of behavior evident at meetings that move the Commission along because of the enthusiasm most commissioners and ex-officios have about the Commission, their mandate, and the opportunity to play a key role in creating the 250th commemoration of the United States. There are a handful of commissioners who also claim to want to celebrate and be a part of the planning, but they continue to obstruct the meetings, so that time and attention is given to their disruptions, rather than getting down to specific planning.

In the first needs assessment conducted in May 2022 in preparation for the retreat and the second needs assessment in February 2023 in preparation for the March meeting, some of the same comments were expressed. In summary these are:

- For those who participated in the second assessment, they were excited to be a part of this Commission charged with the important task of planning for the United States 250th commemoration.
- They were dismayed that so much time was continuing to be spent on managing a handful of dissenters that was continued to distract them from fulfilling their mandate.
- They expressed the need to focus on programmatic planning because there are approximately only three years left to coordinate and plan for the 250th commemoration.
- They are tired of getting caught up in negative conversations that are also aired in the press and that deter fundraising and agencies wanting to be associated with the Commission.

Recommendations

There are many commissioners who are highly motivated and proud to be on the US Semiquincentennial Commission. There is much programmatic work to be done that the Commission will lead and coordinate with state commissions, federal agencies, and the public at large. There is an impatience with continuing to be sidetracked by the petty squabbling that has dominated meetings, which keep some commissioners from attending, which in the past has resulted in not having a quorum to make important decisions.

In order to move forward and better utilize the time and energy of the Commission members, it is recommended that:



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- A reassessment of Commission membership be done so that those highly committed and who have exhibited good citizenship on the Commission, remain in their roles on the Commission.
- Those who have continued to criticize the Commission and disrupt the meetings, who have expressed their desire to dissolve the Commission, are asked to step down so that new commissioners who are committed to moving the programming forward, can be appointed in their place. The three commissioners by name are Andrew Hohns, James Swanson, and Noah Griffin.
- Specific plans are created, shared, and acted upon in order to move forward in an actionable way. One example for this is developing a clearer articulation of America's Invitation, which many commissioners were excited about and wanted to know more.
- The Commission identifies the specific ways they will partner with the federal agencies and state commissions for co-branding of events and activities.
- A specific plan for how to include a wider representation of America's voices and how to share their experiences, be created and implemented.

I am happy to elaborate further on any of the points included and to be useful in planning next steps as needed.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Fisher-Yoshida

Appendix F – Executive Summary of Independent Investigation



MEMORANDUM

~~ATTORNEY-CLIENT PRIVILEGED
COMMUNICATION~~

TO: Lynn Young, Director, America250 Foundation
Cathy Gillespie, Director, America250 Foundation

FROM: Maureen R. Knight, Esq.

DATE: September 23, 2022

RE: Executive Summary of Investigation Results

Our firm was retained by the America250 Foundation to investigate or oversee the investigation of the complaints of gender discrimination, retaliation, and financial improprieties raised by former employees Renee Burchard, Kirsti Garlock, Anna Laymon, and Keri Potts (the Claimants) against the Foundation and Foundation employees in their resignation letters and federal court Complaint (and, later, Amended Complaint). We were retained to assess the validity of these claims and provide the Foundation with legal advice in connection with our findings. The forensic accounting firm Stout was retained to assist us with investigating the allegations of financial improprieties. We have not been retained as counsel for any defendant in the pending litigation involving the Claimants, and neither Constangy nor Stout are assisting any party with that case. This memorandum outlines a summary of the more detailed findings of the investigation we previously provided, based on the information available to us during the investigation.

I. PROCESS

We interviewed or requested to interview Foundation employees who were directly accused by the Claimants of wrong-doing and those most likely to have potentially witnessed any of the complained-of wrong-doing. We also interviewed or requested to interview all female Foundation employees who were at the director-level or above at the time of Claimants' respective separations (including the Claimants), all current female executives, and all female employees who have resigned from the Foundation within the last year. Finally, we interviewed or requested to interview individuals identified by witnesses who might have information relevant to our investigation.

In total, we requested the interviews of 28 individuals. Eleven of those individuals declined to participate in the investigation or did not respond to our request. Four of those eleven are the Claimants. Although Claimants' counsel informed us that Claimants declined to participate in the investigation, Claimants' counsel stated, "We further believe that the amount of detail in the Complaint provides you with ample information to launch your investigation." Of the seventeen individuals who were interviewed, seven were women, and several individuals were interviewed on multiple occasions.

We also requested, received, and reviewed documentation relevant to Claimants' complaint, including documentation supporting statements provided by witnesses relevant to their respective statements. Those documents included the contents of personnel files, company policies, job descriptions,

organizational charts, salary history documentation, email communications, and other company records relevant to the allegations.

For their part, Stout requested to interview eight individuals and interviewed seven of them. They also reviewed hundreds of pages of documentation relevant to Claimant's finance-related complaints, as well as other finance-related concerns raised during the investigation. Those documents included travel expense reimbursement documentation; documentation pertaining to the procurement process, contractual relationships, and payments of eight vendors; and other finance records. Stout did not perform an examination, audit, review or compilation of financial statements, or other form of attestation in accordance with Generally Accepted Auditing Standards ("GAAS") or standards under the Public Company Auditing Oversight Board known as "PCAOB," or in accordance with attest standards established by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants ("AICPA"). Stout also did not perform analytical procedures to determine other potential irregularities with respect to the Foundation's financial and business operations, outside the scope of the investigation.

The Foundation representatives who were our points of contact allowed us discretion to conduct the investigation as we determined was necessary and appropriate. No individual interfered with or attempted to influence our findings. Responses were received to all requests for additional information.

II. CLAIMANTS' COMPLAINTS

A. Hostile Work Environment Based on Gender or in Retaliation for Engaging in Alleged Protected Activity

The information obtained through the investigation did not support a finding that any behavior on the part of Foundation employees was based on gender or any alleged protected activity of the Claimants. While there is evidence that unpleasant and tense interactions between employees occurred in a few instances, we did not find any basis for concluding that any treatment was based on gender or any alleged prior complaints.

B. Gender Discrimination Based on Pay

Regarding the Claimants' allegations of pay discrimination, we reviewed the compensation history of the four Claimants and potentially similarly-situated comparators. Based on this review, we conclude that any differences in compensation were based on legitimate factors that were not related to gender. In addition to the fact that none of the Claimants had true comparators because their positions were unique, we conclude that factors used to establish starting salaries were applied consistently and reasonably. In addition, one Claimant's allegation that her male replacement was paid more than her was inaccurate; he was paid less than her.

C. Disparate Treatment in Work Assignments or Roles Based on Gender

The information obtained through the investigation did not support a finding that gender was a factor in how work was assigned. In addition, the information obtained through the investigation did not support a finding that female executives were excluded from decision-making during Claimants' tenure. Finally, we found no evidence to suggest that gender was a factor in changes to how roles were structured or utilized, or how meetings were conducted, after Joe Daniels became CEO, or that he communicated differently with any employee on the basis of gender or otherwise treated any employee differently based on gender.

D. CEO Selection

The investigation did not reveal support for the allegation that the hiring of Mr. Daniels was done in a discriminatory manner or that Mr. Daniels' gender was a factor in his selection. We did find, however, that it would have been advisable to have a woman involved at some of the earlier stages of the applicant pool review.

E. Financial Improprieties

The accounting firm of Stout concluded that the Foundation does not have systemic finance-related problems or a culture that leads to fraud, waste, or abuse of funds. Based on information gathered and documents produced with respect to their investigation, their investigation revealed that select employees or former employees of the Foundation did not strictly adhere to certain policies and procedures at times (such as overpayment for a meal above the per diem or allowing vendor work to commence prior to contract approval and finalization). Stout found that such findings are not unusual with a start-up organization.

III. GENERAL FEEDBACK STEMMING FROM INVESTIGATION

In addition to asking witnesses about specific factual scenarios that might be relevant to their specific circumstances, we also asked general questions of all witnesses regarding whether they believed they had been treated fairly, whether they had witnessed anyone being treated inappropriately or disrespectfully, and their views on the culture of the workplace. Multiple witnesses noted that the overall culture under Mr. Daniels' leadership has improved, and no witnesses reported that the environment has gotten worse. Several were complimentary of the current culture, noting respect shown by leadership, a collaborative environment, and other positive attributes. Others noted lingering effects of a negative culture that occurred while Claimants represented the majority of leadership at the Foundation. No female witness reported having been mistreated on the basis of her gender. Several witnesses noted the challenges that the in-fighting among the Commission and the pending lawsuit have created, not only on the work that they do for the Foundation, but on the morale of the staff.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the information available during the investigation, we did not find support for the conclusion that there has been gender discrimination at the Foundation or retaliation on the basis of alleged protected activity. However, as noted above, although witnesses reported improvement in the workplace since Mr. Daniels' hire, there are workplace culture issues that may warrant further attention. In addition, our findings are the result of the information to which we had access, and we note that we were not able to interview the Claimants to obtain more details about their assertions and witnesses who may have relevant information declined to be interviewed.

Appendix G - 2022 Federal, State and Legislative Engagement

a. Federal and International Partnerships

The Federal and International Partnerships team serves to bring together all corners of the Federal government, including executive agencies, independent agencies, commissions, boards, committees, and other related entities, and our foreign allies to participate in the commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States.

- Ex Officio Engagement: Efforts to engage the 12 *ex officio* agencies in programming, the public engagement campaign, and the development of the Playbook continues. The agencies participated in quarterly meetings. At the September and November Commission meetings, *ex officio* members presented their programmatic content and plans for the Semiquincentennial (see Appendix C).
- Federal Engagement Efforts: In addition to working with the 12 agencies listed in the U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission Act, the team is working with approximately 20 additional agencies, and is seeking to establish firm contact with all of the federal agencies that participated in the U.S. Bicentennial. The first quarterly Federal Partnerships meeting had 20 agencies represented, including first time attendees from Americorps, USDA, DOJ, VA, Smithsonian Institution, NASA, and the National Gallery of Art. Collaboration with the U.S. Postal Service, Government Publishing Office, U.S. Mint, Census Bureau, VA, and other agencies is essential in development of the commemoration planning process. In outreach efforts, the Census Bureau is the newest agency to begin active collaboration with America250.
- Federal Leadership Meetings: Leadership meetings were held with the Institute of Museum and Library Services, Library of Congress, and Smithsonian Institution. The meetings were a fruitful and candid conversation about recent Commission meetings, challenges, and upcoming programmatic efforts. We are now seeking greater input and buy-in regarding America250's Playbook for the commemoration.
- Legislative Outreach: Members of the team attended the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation annual legislative conference to expand our outreach.
- Shaw 54th Regiment Memorial Event: On June 1, 2022, members of the team were in attendance during the National Rededication Ceremony of the Shaw 54th Regiment Memorial held on the Boston Common. The Memorial commemorates one of the first African American regiments of the Civil War. The bronze and stone memorial honors Colonel Robert Gould Shaw and the soldiers of the 54th Massachusetts Regiment on Boston Common across from the State House. The event marked the end of a multi-year, \$3 million restoration process. It was arranged by a partnership among the National Park Service, the city of Boston, Friends of the Public Garden, and the Museum of African American History, Boston & Nantucket.
- International Engagement with the Department of State: Planning for international engagement continues in close consultation with the Department of State. Key agency officials have been briefed and a meeting with the Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs is forthcoming. Members of the team participated in the first official meeting of the International Advisory Council in January and meetings with various diplomats and leaders of foreign think tanks in Japan, South Africa, and the

United Kingdom.

- Partnership with the Foundation for Art and Preservation in Embassies: International planning is gaining momentum and the latest event is a partnership with the Foundation for Art and Preservation in Embassies (FAPE), which formally agreed to be a partner in September. In October, FAPE announced their America 250 partner program, Gift to the Nation 250, with a gala dinner at the U.S. Department of State. Chairperson Rios and members of the team were in attendance.

b. State Commission Activity

America250 seeks to ensure that each and every American has the opportunity to engage with and participate in the commemoration of our nation's 250th anniversary, and most Americans will have the opportunity to do so at the local and state level. Therefore, America250's State Partnerships team is encouraging all U.S. states, territories, and the District of Columbia to establish their own official 250th commissions through executive order or legislation in order to lead statewide planning for the anniversary.

The State team worked with the 250th organization in Massachusetts, Revolution250, to coordinate remarks from America 250's president at a press event in December to kick off the State's year-long schedule of events marking the 250th anniversary of the Boston Tea Party (December 16, 2023). The State team also coordinated with the State Chronicles project, led by What on Earth Publishing, to begin collaboration on educational resources for the 13 original colonies for the Semiquincentennial. The State team planned an America250 panel discussion and a keynote address with Chairperson Rosie Rios at the National Council for the Social Studies conference in December, reaching social studies teachers in States across the country with information about the Semiquincentennial.

At the November Commission meeting, Cassandra Coleman, Executive Director at America250PA, presented about the activities underway in Pennsylvania to commemorate the Semiquincentennial.

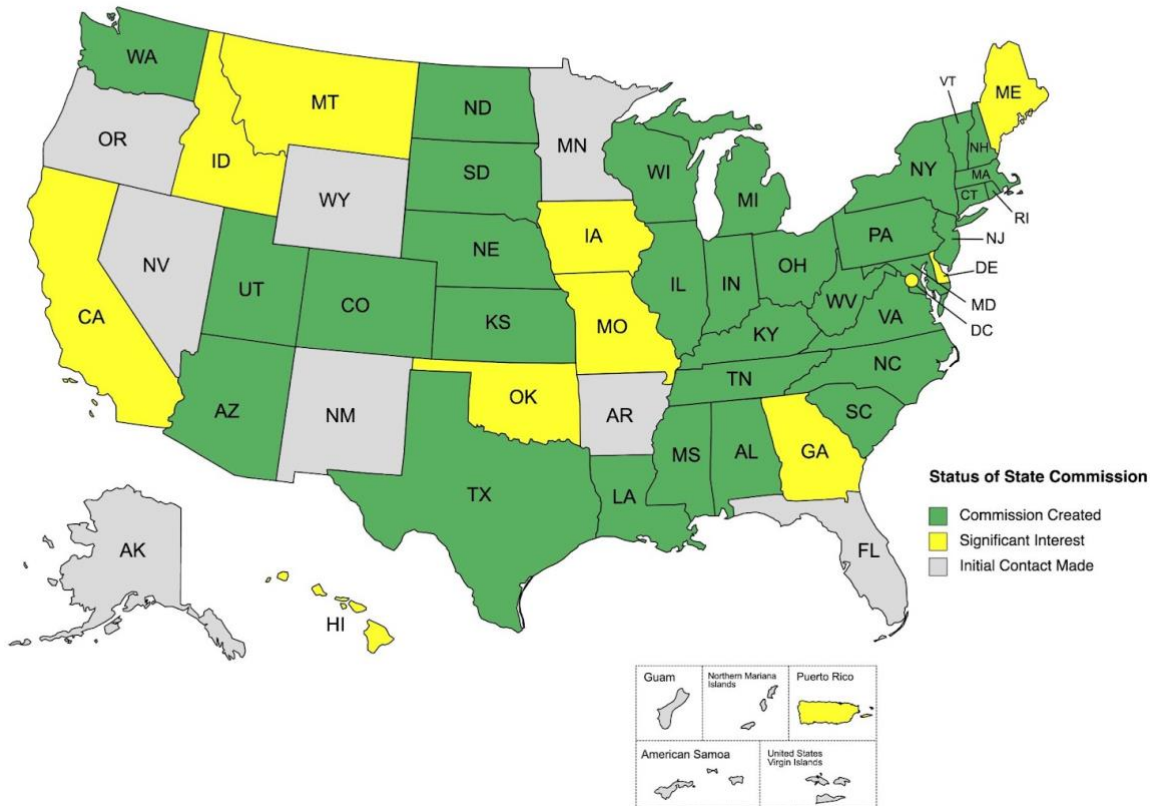
The State team continues to schedule and facilitate regional calls with State commissions (Southern Campaigns, Western States, Great Lakes, Mid-Atlantic).

- Commissions Created: As of March 31, 2023, 32 States have established their commissions through legislation or executive action, including: Alabama, Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

- Significant Interest: As of March 31, 2023, ten additional States, the District of Columbia, and one territory are very interested in creating 250th commissions: California, Delaware, Washington, D.C., Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Missouri, Montana, Oklahoma, and Puerto Rico.

- Initial Contact Made: Team members continue outreach activities by contacting the remaining 12 States and territories to create commissions.

STATE OUTREACH MAP (as of 03/31/23)



c. Legislative Engagement

- **Chair Appointment:** Commissioner and former 43rd Treasurer of the United States, Rosie Rios, was appointed to serve as Chairperson of the U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission by President Biden in July 2022. Rios was appointed to serve on the Commission on January 11, 2018, by Senate Minority Leader Charles E. Schumer. Under her leadership, Chairperson Rios is refocusing the Commission’s work to accomplish its mission set forth by Congress in P.L. 114-196, as amended.
- **Commissioner Appointments:** Of the 24 Commission appointments, there are four vacancies as of February 17, 2023. Commissioner Amy Gutmann resigned her position on March 1, 2022. House Minority Leader Jeffries will select Ambassador Gutmann’s replacement. Senator Tom Cotton resigned his position on March 11, 2022. Senator Pat Toomey retired from Congress at the end of the 117th Congress. Senate Minority Leader McConnell is expected to appoint replacements for Senators Cotton and Toomey to the Commission. Senator Casey resigned his position on February 7, 2023. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) is expected to appoint a replacement for Senator Casey. See Appendix A.
- **Congressional America250 Caucus:** The Government Relations team continued to contact congressional members and staff regarding invitations to join the Congressional America250 Caucus. Caucus members are regularly informed of activities related to America250 and upcoming commemorations of the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. As 2026 nears, Caucus members will be encouraged to get involved in briefings, meetings, and promote the

Semiquicentennial on the national stage, in their State, and in their communities whenever possible. As of March 31, 2023, the Congressional America250 Caucus included 12 U.S. Senators and 71 members of the U.S. House of Representatives.

Commission Co-Chairs: The co-chairs of the Commission are the eight elected Members of Congress who serve as Commissioners and sixteen private citizens:

Senator Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH)	Rep. Robert Aderholt (R-AL-4)
Vacancy	Rep. Dwight Evans (D-PA-3)
Vacancy	Rep. Maria Elvira Salazar (R-FL-27)
Vacancy	Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-NJ-12)

House of Representatives

Rep. Mark Amodei (R-NV-02)	Rep. Bill Johnson (R-OH-06)
Rep. Jodey Arrington (R-TX-19)	Rep. Jen Kiggans (R-VA-02)
Rep. Brian Babin (R-TX-36)	Rep. Daniel Kildee (D-MI-08)
Rep. Don Bacon (R-NE-02)	Rep. Andy Kim (D-NJ-03)
Rep. Andy Barr (R-KY-06)	Rep. John Larson (D-CT-01)
Rep. Don Beyer, Jr. (D-VA-08)	Rep. Michael McCaul (R-TX-10)
Rep. Stephanie Bice (R-OK-05)	Rep. Dan Meuser (R-PA-09)
Rep. Gus Bilirakis (R-FL-12)	Rep. John Moolenaar (R-MI-02)
Rep. Sanford Bishop, Jr. (D-GA-02)	Rep. Alex Mooney (R-WV-02)
Rep. Michael Burgess (R-TX-26)	Rep. Barry Moore (R-AL-02)
Rep. Jerry Carl (R-AL-01)	Rep. Troy Nehls (R-TX-22)
Rep. Andre Carson (D-IN-07)	Rep. Ralph Norman (R-SC-05)
Rep. John Carter (R-TX-31)	Rep. Chris Pappas (D-NH-01)
Rep. Matthew Cartwright (D-PA-08)	Rep. Bill Pascrell, Jr. (D-NJ-09)
Rep. Madeleine Dean (D-PA-04)	Rep. Scott Perry (R-PA-10)
Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-CT-03)	Rep. August Pfluger (R-TX-11)
Rep. Scott DesJarlais (R-TN-04)	Rep. Bill Posey (R-FL-08)
Rep. Debbie Dingell (D-MI-06)	Rep. David Rouzer (R-NC-07)
Rep. Lloyd Doggett (D-TX-37)	Rep. Mary Gay Scanlon (D-PA-05)
Rep. Veronica Escobar (D-TX-16)	Rep. Mikie Sherrill (D-NJ-11)
Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA-01)	Rep. Mike Simpson (R-ID-02)
Rep. Lizzie Fletcher (D-TX-07)	Rep. Elise Stefanik (R-NY-21)
Rep. Andrew Garbarino (R-NY-02)	Rep. Bryan Steil (R-WI-01)
Rep. Pete Gosar (R-AZ-09)	Rep. Glenn ‘GT’ Thompson (R-PA-15)
Rep. Morgan Griffith (R-VA-09)	Rep. Dina Titus (D-NV-01)
Rep. Raul Grijalva (D-AZ-07)	Rep. Paul Tonko (D-NY-20)
Rep. Glenn Grothman (R-WI-06)	Rep. Jeff Van Drew (R-NJ-02)
Rep. French Hill (R-AR-02)	Rep. Marc Veasey (D-TX-33)
Rep. Ashley Hinson (R-IA-02)	Rep. Brad Wenstrup (R-OH-02)
Rep. Chrissy Houlahan (D-PA-06)	Rep. Bruce Westerman (R-AR-04)
Rep. Richard Hudson (R-NC-09)	Rep. Susan Wild (D-PA-07)
Rep. Darrell Issa (R-CA-48)	Rep. Roger Williams (R-TX-25)
Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX-18)	Rep. Robert Wittman (R-VA-01)

Senate

Sen. Richard Blumenthal (D-CT)	Sen. Kevin Cramer (R-ND)	Sen. Christopher Murphy (D-CT)
Sen. Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV)	Sen. Chuck Grassley (R-IA)	Sen. James Risch (R-ID)
Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME)	Sen. Mike Lee (R-UT)	Sen. Roger Wicker (R-MS)
Sen. Tom Cotton (R-AR)	Sen. Cynthia Lummis (R-WY)	

- Congressional America250 Caucus Meeting: On July 19, the Government Relations team, joined by Christian Chelak of Senator Pat Toomey's office and Brad Korten of Representative Bonnie Watson Coleman's office, Commissioner Cathy Gillespie and Executive Director Frank Giordano, hosted a meeting of the Congressional America250 Caucus. All Caucus members were invited to participate. The group discussed the goals and mission of the Commission and the path forward.
- Caucus Activity: Virtual meetings of the Caucus, led by Brad Korten of the Office of Representative Bonnie Watson Coleman, were held on October 4 and November 20. In meetings described as brainstorming sessions, Congressional America250 Caucus members and staff were invited to offer legislative and programmatic ideas for commemoration events. The Commission was asked to create a document where legislative and other ideas could be recorded and tracked for future Caucus meetings. Also, an in-person reception was conducted on December 6, in the Longworth House Office Building. Hosted by the Commission, Chair Rosie Rios greeted fellow Commissioners, Caucus members and other Members and congressional staff, representatives of federal *ex officio* agencies, and several interested parties.
- Semiquincentennial Commemorative Coin Act: Semiquincentennial Commemorative Coin bills, S. 2384 & HR 4429, were introduced by Representative Bonnie Watson Coleman and Senator Pat Toomey on July 13 and July 21, 2021, respectively. Members of Congress were asked to cosponsor the coin bill. During 2022, bill sponsors/cosponsors grew to 68 Members. As of the end of the 117th Congress, the bill sponsors/cosponsors included eight U.S. Senators and 60 members of the U.S. House of Representatives.
- Reports to the President and the U.S. Congress: The Government Relations team coordinated the collection of information for the submission of the second report to the President and the U.S. Congress that covered the period from enactment of the legislation creating the Commission to the end of 2021. The reports were submitted in February 2022.
- Quarterly Reports: Included in underlying legislation of H.R. 133 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, enacted on December 27, 2020, is language directing the Commission to provide the Appropriations Committees with quarterly reports detailing spending by activity to continue to help the Committees understand the Commission's funding needs. The Commission continues to provide the Committees with quarterly reports.
- FY 2023 Budget Request Review: The Commission's Government Relations team hosted a meeting with Christian Chelak of Senator Pat Toomey's office and Brad Korten of Representative Bonnie Watson Coleman's office on July 13 with staff of elected Commissioners. There was discussion of the FY 2023 appropriations request and general overviews of America250 plans and programs and private fundraising plans and goals.
- FY 2023 Budget Request: At the direction of Commission leadership, the Government Relations team completed preparation of the Commission's FY 2023 budget request. The budget request of \$15,000,000 was included in President Biden's budget request to Congress and was submitted to the Senate and House Appropriations Committees through the offices of Senator Pat Toomey and Representative Bonnie Watson Coleman. The request included an increase of \$7,000,000 over the FY 2022 federal appropriation level of \$8,000,000. Congress approved the FY 2023 appropriations bill, H.R. 2617, that

included the Commission's \$15,000,000 request. After the passage of continuing resolutions in late 2022, final action on the FY 2023 appropriations bill was concluded by enactment of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 (Public Law 117-328, enacted December 29, 2022). The bill provides the Commission \$15,000,000 for FY 2023 and the funds are available until September 30, 2024.

- **FY 2024 Budget Request:** The Commission has approved its budget request of \$30,000,000 for FY 2024. The request is included in President Biden's budget request to Congress released on March 9, 2023. For the FY 2024 Federal appropriations cycle, the Commission, in coordination with our elected Commissioners, have submitted the funding request to the Senate and House Appropriations Committees.

Appendix H - Other Key Initiatives and Activities in 2022

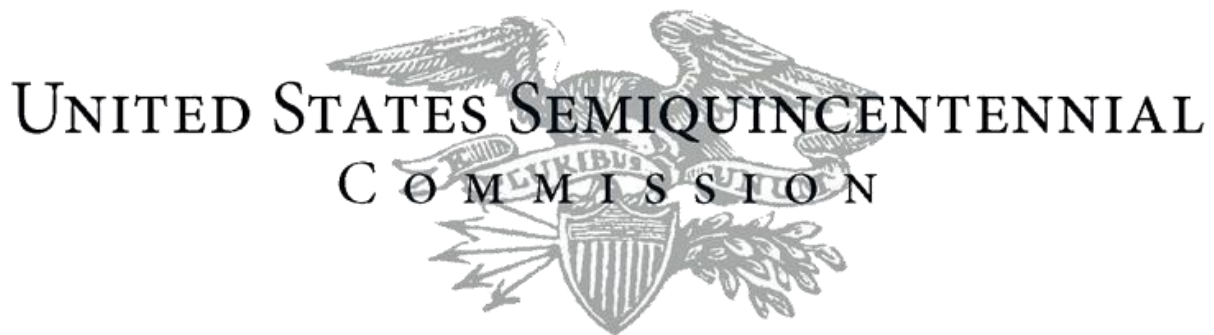
- National Partnerships Network Kickoff: In January, America250 hosted the first National Partnerships Network working call to foster collaboration with and between our partners and officially announced the partnership with the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) via media release on America250 platforms as well as DAR social platforms. To facilitate interdepartmental collaboration and transparency, an overview spreadsheet of all partnerships that details what the partnership entails, potential future programs, and tie-ins to America250 legislative mandates, including Host Cities and the Time Capsule, was developed and shared across the America250 organization.
- Presidential Site Summit: In March, Commissioners Cathy Gillespie and Lynn Young participated in an opportunity for leaders of shared presidential history to convene to share innovative ideas and discuss insights into the management and outreach of presidential libraries, historic homes, and museums. The four-day Presidential Site Summit in Dallas, Texas, also provided an opportunity to talk about America250, its mission, work to date, and future plans. The event was covered by the Focus Daily News.
- Carpenter's Hall Agreement: On April 6, America250 announced a national partnership with Carpenters' Company of Philadelphia, the nonprofit organization overseeing Carpenters' Hall. The agreement between Carpenters' Hall and America250 establishes the Young People's Continental Congress, or YPCC, which will engage students in advocacy work through 2026, culminating with the Semiquincentennial of the United States and the delegates' graduation from high school.
- Circle of Tribal Advisors: Quarterly Circle of Tribal Advisors (COTA) meetings are supporting engagement and participation by inviting Native community representatives to directly shape America250 programming and planning. All 574 Federally recognized Tribes, along with 200-plus Tribal Historic Preservation Officers were invited to join America250's Circle of Tribal Advisors (COTA) and partner with America250. On April 6, the first Circle of Tribal Advisors meeting was conducted to learn what Tribes and the Native community envision the commemoration to include. A subsequent meeting was held on July 13 to encourage the engagement and participation of Native community representatives to directly shape our programming and planning. Native American and Alaska Native participants joined from various organizations including: First Alaskans Institute; Azachorok, Inc.; Oneida Nation of Wisconsin; National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition; and the National Park Service.
- Tribal Partnerships Roundtables: America250 invited the Native community to share perspectives on America's 250th anniversary during roundtable discussions. These are listening sessions initiated by Native communities and organizations. The Tribal Partnerships team also invited the Native community to participate in roundtables during mid-year conferences of the National Congress of American Indians and Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians.
- National Partnerships Network Outreach: In April, America250 hosted the second National Partnership Network call. Participants updated America250 on their upcoming events and initiatives, which led to programming collaborations. A major partner, Major League Baseball, invited America250 leadership to attend Diamond Anniversary events in NY celebrating the 75th anniversary of Jackie Robinson breaking the color barrier. Later that month, America250 finalized its partnership with the

Association for the Study of African American Life and History with continued conversations around partner activation and program development.

- Memorial Day Campaign: America250 marked Memorial Day (May 30, 2022) with a three-day online social media campaign.
- Juneteenth: For the first official holiday observance of Juneteenth (June 19, 2022), America250 participated in a livestream event hosted by the 400 Years of African-American History Commission. The America250 President and CEO gave remarks on June 19 as part of the event. The African American History Commission also launched its own online campaign, including publishing stories about Juneteenth and encouraging the American public to learn more about the historic day.
- Juneteenth Freedom Forum Event: On Juneteenth, the America250 supported the 400 Years of African-American History Commission's live-streamed Freedom Forward event in Galveston, TX, and Ft. Monroe, VA. Speakers from the event discussed the history of Juneteenth while site stewards, municipalities, and mayors from across the country signed proclamations to commit to reflecting on Freedom for all Americans.
- North Dakota/Theodore Roosevelt Event: In September, members of America250 traveled to the future site of the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library. The day was spent with North Dakota Governor Doug Burgum, tribal leaders, the North Dakota America250 State Commission, the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library Foundation (TRPLF) team and Board, the Roosevelt family, and the people of North Dakota reconfirmed the importance of raising awareness in all States of our critical mission to ensure that the 250th anniversary is the most inclusive in our nation's history. America250 team members met with leaders of North Dakota to listen to how their communities hope to come together to celebrate and commemorate this historic anniversary. The Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library will open on July 4, 2026, in conjunction with the 250th anniversary of our nation's founding.
- Combined Federal Campaign: A significant milestone for the third quarter was the 2022 Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) launch on September 1, which marked America250's first participation as an OMB-approved charity in the campaign. The CFC campaign is directed at the 4 million+ Federal government employees, members of the Armed Forces, and Federal retirees. America250 participated in CFC events held at the 200+ Federal agencies for their employees through January 14, 2023, the campaign's conclusion.
- American Association of State and Local History Conference: America250 presented on engaging the Native community at the American Association of State and Local History annual conference on September 16. The workshop, "Keeping It Local: Bringing the Revolution to Your Neighborhood" included speakers from other State historical organizations. The presentation included an overview on how to engage from three levels of increasing engagement, followed by a Q&A session.
- Carpenter's Hall 300th Anniversary: In October, Chairperson Rosie Rios, Commissioner Dan DiLella, Commission Executive Director Frank Giordano, and America250 staff participated in the press event celebrating Carpenters Hall's 300th anniversary. The Carpenters' Company was founded in 1724. Construction of Carpenters' Hall was completed in 1774, and they hosted the First Continental Congress

later that year. 2024 marks the 300th anniversary of the nation's oldest continuously operating trade guild and the 250th anniversary of one of our nation's most significant founding events.

- **BNY Mellon Event:** On October 15, Chairperson Rosie Rios spoke at Bank of New York Mellon's Annual International Monetary Fund Luncheon about the Commission and preliminary plans for commemorating the nation's 250th anniversary.
- **Veterans Day Salute:** In honor of Veterans Day, Chairperson Rosie Rios, Foundation President Emily Sexton, and America250 staff attended the America's Valor: Salute to our Heroes program, which shares the stories of America's greatest heroes from World War II to the present day. In addition, members of America250 were honored to participate in a wreath-laying ceremony at the Arlington National Cemetery Tomb of the Unknown Soldier on Veterans Day (November 11, 2022).
- **Veteran's Day and Giving Tuesday:** Planning for America250's Veteran's Day and Giving Tuesday fundraising and awareness campaigns helped raise awareness, honor, and reflect on heroes who served in the Armed Forces. Giving Tuesday provided donors and future donors with a platform to contribute to America250 and inspire the generosity of people all over the world.
- **Jackson Ward Event:** On November 19, Chairperson Rios and Commissioner Gillespie were invited to attend the JXN Ward Skipwith-Roper Homecoming and Community Dig in Richmond, Virginia. Jackson Ward is the nation's first historically Black urban neighborhood and is registered in the National Register of Historic Places. The JXN Project's mission is to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Jackson Ward and recognize the Commonwealth's first black homeowner, Andrew Peyton Skipwith. JXN Project co-founders, sisters Sesha and Enjoli Moon, plan to preserve Jackson Ward history through an archeological dig on the land where Skipwith's home will be restored. America250 has developed stories for social media inspired by Jackson Ward.
- **National Social Studies Conference:** In December, America250 staff and Commission Executive Director Frank Giordano spoke on a panel at the National Council for the Social Studies Conference (NCSS) in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Chairperson Rios was invited to give the closing keynote address. As an outcome of the closing keynote presentation from the NSCC conference, *The Philadelphia Inquirer* published Chairperson Rios' op-ed, [Want to restore civics education? Let's start as we prepare for America's 250th birthday.](#)
- **Rodeo Association Engagement:** In December, Commissioner Lynn Young and America250 presented at the Professional Cowboy Rodeo Association (PRCA) Convention and National Finals Rodeo (NFR) in Las Vegas. PRCA and NFR conduct over 680 rodeos annually in all 50 states, with the NFR Finals broadcast nationally on ESPN. The keynote speaker at the event was Taylor Sheridan, the *Yellowstone* television series writer, and producer. PRCA and their 500+ Rodeo Committees will partner with America250 in 2023 and beyond to promote awareness, create excitement, and fundraise at each rodeo for the Semiquincentennial.
- **Boston Tea Party Anniversary:** Emily Sexton, Foundation President, spoke at the December 16 press event for the kickoff of the 250th anniversary of the Boston Tea Party in Boston, Massachusetts. In honor of this upcoming anniversary, The Boston Tea Party Ships & Museum is creating a grand-scale reenactment on the 250th Anniversary of the Boston Tea Party on December 16, 2023.



Strategic Plan Interim Report to the White House

*Submitted for review and comment to the White House
September 30, 2019*

Draft Deliberative Document for Discussion Only

Prologue

“What we are witnessing today is the renewal of the American spirit...

“In nine years, the United States will celebrate the 250th anniversary of our founding—250 years since the day we declared our independence. It will be one of the great milestones in the history of the world. But what will America look like as we reach our 250th year? What kind of country will we leave for our children?...

“Hopefully, the 250th year for America will see a world that is more peaceful, more just, and more free. On our 100th anniversary, in 1876, citizens from across our nation came to Philadelphia to celebrate America’s centennial. At that celebration, the country’s builders and artists and inventors showed off their wonderful creations. Alexander Graham Bell displayed his telephone for the first time. Remington unveiled the first typewriter. An early attempt was made at electric light. Thomas Edison showed an automatic telegraph and an electric pen. Imagine the wonders our country could know in America’s 250th year...

“Think of the marvels we can achieve if we simply set free the dreams of our people. Cures to the illnesses that have always plagued us are not too much to hope. American footprints on distant worlds are not too big a dream. Millions lifted from welfare to work is not too much to expect. And streets where mothers are safe from fear, schools where children learn in peace, and jobs where Americans prosper and grow are not too much to ask.”

--President Donald J. Trump
Joint Address to Congress
February 28, 2017

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission (“the Commission”) has the distinct honor and privilege of designing and executing a comprehensive plan to engage all Americans in what we believe should be the largest and most inclusive peacetime celebration and commemoration in our nation’s history (hereafter referred to as “America 250”). Since January 2019, the Commission has focused on the development of a strategic plan to guide its work over the next seven years. The work thus far has yielded a clear statement of vision and key themes:

“To inspire the American Spirit among all Americans and each American, based on our founding principles, on our journey to a more perfect union”

Key themes:

- **Unity:** *Our collective strength embodies our individual liberties and is reflected in our national motto: “E pluribus unum.”*
- **Civic Engagement:** *The freedoms that we enjoy as Americans come with a responsibility and an obligation to contribute to our democracy, and at times, to make sacrifices for the greater good.*
- **Education:** *Understanding the significance of our country’s founding requires reflection, knowledge and awareness of U.S. history and how our democracy works: who we are, where we came from and where we are headed in our community, our nation and the world.*

The Unity theme has been the most universally endorsed goal for the America 250 events, or as one of the America 250 commissioners wrote in an essay anticipating America’s July 4, 2026, events:

“all of America stands together today!”

The Commission’s Focus and Important Accomplishments to Date

- The Commission has created a clear vision and key themes to guide the design and execution of all America 250 events. This vision statement has received remarkable consensus and endorsement from the commissioners and a variety of key stakeholder groups.
- The Commission has created a clear priority to design inspirational National Signature Programs to highlight the America 250 celebration. These will include national events, as well as programs by the relevant federal agencies and the inclusion of other countries. These programs will be designed to create convenings of Americans in highly experiential, interactive events.
- The Commission has created an America 250 Foundation to accomplish the significant fundraising goals that will need to be achieved to support both infrastructure investments and programmatic investments.
- The Commission has begun to secure partnerships across all sectors of the country, but with a particular focus within the Arts, Entertainment and Education sectors as the primary channels for communicating the America 250 vision.
- The Commission has recognized that all events and programs must be designed and executed with an uncompromising attention to the safety and security of those Americans participating.
- The Commission is committed to encouraging, incentivizing and supporting participation by all fifty states in developing their own innovative America 250 programs as well as local communities.
- The Commission has created a task force to evaluate the parks and public places infrastructure across the nation to recommend investments in both existing and new infrastructure.

- The Commissioners agree that the America 250 events should promote pride and hope for the future of America.

White House Engagement

The Commission welcomes the active participation, engagement and assistance of the White House in the development and growth of America 250. Our hope is that through this early strategic report, we may gain White House support in the following key areas:

- Endorsement of the Commission’s strategic plan and priorities in late 2019
- Involvement in the development of a compelling and exciting national launch of America 250 activities, ideally in early 2020
- Endorsement of the America 250 Congressional Caucus
- Assistance in the development and growth of the America 250 Foundation, including support of funding and fundraising activities
- Endorsement of America 250 with corporations and NGO’s who are being identified as important partners in America 250 national programs and events
- A Cabinet-level directive that federal agencies develop their own plans in accordance with the America 250 framework for national participation, events and programs
- Encouragement to all states and territories to establish and actively engage their own state commissions in celebration of the U.S. Semiquincentennial
- Active contribution to the development and execution of a series of National Signature Events and Programs
- Direction that the State Department secure broad, meaningful participation of other nations and friends from around the world
- Support for significant funding requests in Congress for resources necessary to execute a highly fitting and inspirational America 250 celebration
- Regular assignment of a small cadre of White House Fellows to assume significant roles in the design and execution of America 250 initiatives over the next seven years

Through these activities and your support we hope to engage the President and the White House to help envision and execute a patriotic and inspirational America 250. We welcome the full assistance of the White House to help us build the Semiquincentennial into a great national legacy, starting now with the development of an exciting vision for America 250.

II. VISIONARY FRAMEWORK

Overview of the Strategic Plan Process and Engagement to Date

The planning process used to develop the framework and priorities reflected here has been built around three key objectives: simplicity, actionability and involvement. Consistent with these three key objectives, our planning process has so far included input gained from more than 35 meetings among work teams of commissioners devoted exclusively to the strategic planning process, as well as involvement from an initial group of more than 65 national and state organizations that have expressed early interest in partnering in the success of the Semiquincentennial. Having engaged so many organizations at this early stage, we are encouraged by the enthusiastic response, and would hope and expect that many of these organizations will ultimately participate in a significant way, designing their own America 250 programs and events.

Our statement of strategic intent in Appendix A. outlines:

- what the *vision and purpose* of the America 250 commemoration aspire to be
- the *three key themes* that will guide the design of programs and events
- the *four broad strategic priorities* that will guide how the Commission proposes to achieve the vision over the next seven years and beyond.

Vision and Purpose

The U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission acknowledges the significance of America's first charter of freedom, the Declaration of Independence, adopted July 4, 1776. We take inspiration from the Declaration of Independence and the country that has grown from the philosophy and form of government embedded therein.

The Declaration of Independence begins:

“When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature’s God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.—That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.—That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.”

These are the principles upon which America's independence was established and which, generation after generation, have inspired a Spirit of America that stands ready to pledge life, liberty and honor in defense and pursuit of these ideals. Inspired by that vision, the Commission has adopted the America 250 purpose:

“To inspire the American Spirit among all Americans and each American, based on our founding principles, on our journey to a more perfect union”

While simple and straightforward, this purpose statement has benefited from the extensive contribution and review of commissioners and many key stakeholders. Time and again, four critical elements have risen to the forefront of our design efforts:

- ***“Inspire the American Spirit”***: A quick online search of “What is the America Spirit?” will yield 340 million hits...and they are all different. Words like opportunity, freedom, of the people, common good, volunteerism, equality and responsibility are routinely mentioned. Perhaps the most common referent word is *freedom*, but that does not fully capture the essence of *American Spirit*. Standing alone, that word does not convey action or dynamism. The Commission's use of this phrase is meant to imply “the freedom to design one's own destiny.” In that respect, the phrase *American Spirit* is an individualized definition of freedom, while honoring and respecting the right of all Americans to form their own destinies and define their own conception of that Spirit. The Commission fully recognizes that America 250 must be a commemoration and celebration, but also leave an inspirational legacy.
- ***“All Americans and each American”***: The America 250 commemoration aims to inspire *all* 350 million Americans about what it means to be an American, our history and the opportunities to contribute to our nation. To inspire *all* Americans, we must ensure that we *include* all Americans in both the design and “experience” of America 250. Likewise, our stakeholder review process has revealed a yearning for *each* American to have a *personal* experience as they participate in America 250 programs and events.
- ***“Based on our founding principles”***: There is little disagreement that the foundation of American democracy is built on the founding principles as outlined in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. These fundamental ideals have survived for 250 years as the aspirational goals of the American “experiment” in self-government. The America 250 celebration aims to connect these ideas to today's world, stimulating dialogue and exploration around their continuing relevance and importance.
- ***“Our journey to a more perfect union”***: Inspired by the first sentence of the U.S. Constitution, this element of the Commission's vision serves the dual purpose of reminding our country of the power of

unity, while also acknowledging that there have been periods in our history during which we have failed as a country to fully live up to our founding principles. We must be constantly vigilant in safeguarding these principles as we pass them along to future generations.

Key Themes

The Commission has set out to develop a strategic plan with a clear statement of key themes and goals to guide the design of America 250. Initially, the Commission expected that identifying and narrowing in on key themes could prove to be a complex process. It has proven a pleasant surprise that our process so far has yielded a remarkable degree of consensus, excitement and enthusiasm on three key themes:

Unity, Civic Engagement and Education

These themes were built from Commissioners' essays and work teams, as well as focus groups we have conducted with key stakeholders. Verbatim excerpts from the Commissioners' essays are provided in Appendix B.

III. STRATEGIC PLAN PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES

What Has Been Accomplished Thus Far

While the scope and scale of the America 250 work is complex, that very fact has led to a conscious effort to frame the Commission's strategic priorities in simple, concise language. Appendix A further outlines these four broad strategic priorities identified by the Commission:

- ***Reflect the dynamism of America with an engaging, educational and inspirational vision***
- ***Build upon the strength of our nation through fostering inclusive relationships and securing valued partners***
- ***Inspire the entire nation to convene and celebrate through national events, as well as encouraging and nurturing state and local community events and legacies***
- ***Earn the trust of America through excellence and best practices in our execution***

The Commission has also been mindful in the design of our strategic priorities to remain faithful to the requirements of Public Law 114-196, including the requirements that we:

- Commemorate the period from pre-1776 through to the present day
- Give due consideration to the plans of state, local and private organizations
- Emphasize events in locations of historical significance to the Revolution
- Emphasize persons and places with significant impact on the whole of our history
- Emphasize ideas in our history that have been important to world affairs
- Evaluate and recommend infrastructure needed to support a successful America 250 commemoration at the national, state and local levels

Maintaining alignment on and successfully executing these priorities will be our primary focus over the next seven years. We are committed to keeping a tight focus, insisting upon clear accountability and managing the disciplined execution of our objectives to achieve the America 250 that our nation deserves. The current planning horizon for each of the priorities is the period between 2019 and 2022, at which time we will reassess, adjust and revise our strategic plan and objectives as America 250 grows and further takes shape.

The Commission's work to define strategic priorities has produced the results outlined below. In addition, the Commission has identified certain strengths, opportunities and potential issues to be addressed as we move forward in the design and execution stages.

Strengths

- Our Congressional Mandate lends immediate credibility to our efforts and has greatly facilitated access to stakeholders
- We have encountered a high level of enthusiasm for the promise and possibilities of America 250 from all parties engaged thus far, and federal agencies in particular have readily embraced their own program planning
- We benefit from the active involvement of a core group of highly committed commissioners with significant depth, experience and influence within their respective areas of expertise

Opportunities

- Our work can inspire tremendous pride and deeper understanding that is shared across the nation, promoting national unity and mutual commitment to the commonwealth
- The profile and excitement of America 250 can jump-start the next generation's interest in civics, history and American culture
- America 250's focus on the founding of our nation can lead to greater citizen participation in community, local and state organizations; higher interest in voting; and greater excitement for other means of civic engagement
- America 250's scale can enable every American to tell their story, being broadly inclusive in our design and execution

Potential Issues

- Our nation is wonderfully diverse, and it can sometimes be challenging to ensure that we have engaged partners from every facet of American culture; we must therefore be highly inclusive in the design process, proactively engaging stakeholders from around the nation in the development and execution of America 250
- We may encounter pressure from partisan or special interests in the design and execution of America 250; we must resist such overtures to ensure that the celebration remains exciting and relevant to every American
- The scale and ambition of our vision for the Semiquincentennial may be constrained by insufficient funding and resources; to be successful, we must develop strong support from the White House and Congress, as well as private partners and sponsors

Appendix C reflects the Commission's Strategic Plan, including key objectives. Provided below is a brief status update on the progress of each of the strategic priorities thus far.

Status of Priority I. Create an Engaging, Educational and Inspirational Vision. We are excited by the bold and engaging vision that has already taken shape. The commissioners have reached consensus on the vision and purpose of the America 250 commemoration, and the three key themes of Unity, Civic Engagement and Education are receiving nearly unanimous accord with key stakeholders thus far. In addition, our four broad strategic priorities are already actively guiding the work of the Commission and the Secretariat staff. Significant progress has been made toward this strategic priority:

- The Commission is in the design stages with a professional communications firm to develop and execute a dynamic and inspirational launch for the America 250 national celebration.

- We have retained well-regarded professional services firms to develop a world-class branding, communications and marketing campaign. This includes an America 250 logo to brand all communications and marketing efforts, communications materials and public relations kits and strategies, as well as identifying prominent, highly recognized “brand ambassadors” to begin endorsing the America 250 commemoration well in advance of 2026.
- To advance the educational dimension of this priority, the Commission is well underway in program and partnership discussions with the Smithsonian Institution, the Department of Education, the National Archives and the Library of Congress.
- Focus group discussions and feedback on the vision and themes have already been gained from more than 65 highly diverse key stakeholder groups, with invaluable feedback on content and messaging. In addition, we have identified youth and military personnel and veterans as two critical cohorts to include in our design process.
- Commission congressional members have agreed to form an America 250 Caucus to advocate broad support and participation in the observance.
- The Commission has developed an early website and has engaged a professional design firm to enhance the website to be the “go-to” source for all organizations and Americans who want to learn more about how to develop their own local events and programs.

Status of Priority II. Build Relationships and Secure Valued Partners. The Commission recognizes that the scale and scope of America 250 require extensive outreach and an open invitation to all those who wish to contribute, collaborate and celebrate. The Commission does not wish to and cannot undertake to micromanage the execution of what will undoubtedly prove to be tens of thousands of unique local events hosted by states, communities and private organizations. Instead, our goal is to create an exciting and consistent framework around which interested parties can shape their America 250 programs, ensuring that 2026 reverberates with events that speak to one another, but do so in the local language and customs of the many diverse traditions and places of America. We believe a truly successful America 250 will require that the Commission working with its partners provide clear guidelines for all organizations and communities that wish to participate, while simultaneously creating a climate of trust that encourages creativity and innovation in these customized programs. The Commission’s commitment to be inclusive and to broadly invite *all* Americans and organizations to actively participate is a clear focus.

- The Commission has identified three roles for potential partners to adopt:
 - *Design partners:* We have made substantial progress in our first nine months to engage a broad list of diverse organizations to offer input and suggestions on the vision, key themes and priorities of the Commission. Appendix D lists the impressive group of organizations that have already provided input and feedback.
 - *Engagement partners:* We have engaged professional services firms to assist in identifying key organizations to approach regarding licensing and trademark use as they design their own customized programs and events. In addition to the critical group of potential sponsorship partners referenced below, this category will include foundations, universities and colleges, museums, nongovernmental organizations and other members of civil society.
 - *Resource partners:* Private sponsorships and philanthropic support will be a crucial element in the successful execution of America 250. We have engaged a professional services firm and have identified 20 categories of important sponsorship and value-in-kind organizations and companies. These categories currently include more than 100 public and privately held companies in financial services, automotive, air travel, telecommunications, food and beverage, retail, healthcare, consumer goods, insurance, energy, sports and entertainment, apparel and fashion and other areas.

- The Commission, in partnership with the American Battlefield Trust, has incorporated the America 250 Foundation with 501(c)3 status to be the vehicle to generate the considerable private resources that will be needed to sustain the America 250 events and programs. The Foundation is moving ahead aggressively with staffing and becoming operational, and initial outreach to dozens of the potential resource partners will occur before the end of 2019.
- The Commission, along with the Foundation principals, has identified a target list of important organizations in the Arts and Entertainment industries to encourage their engagement in America 250 (e.g., Major League Baseball, major museums, the Kennedy Center, publishers, celebrity ambassadors and spokespersons, authors, telecommunications companies, movie studios, Broadway theatre and music contacts).
- The Commission has already reached out to more than 65 key stakeholders through focus groups, task forces and town hall meetings. Before the end of 2019, we anticipate convening at least five additional, large focus groups to gather design feedback from: Native American tribes, African American associations, Latino associations, youth organizations and military groups.

Status of Priority III. Be Comprehensive in Scope and Both National and Local in Impact. Public Law 114-196 directs the Commission to support and develop national events and programs while also working with other nations, federal agencies, states and territories to nurture and inspire their participation. Of particular note, the legislation requires that the national celebration's exhibits and events take place, to the maximum extent possible, in buildings of historical significance to the Revolution or facilities proximate thereto. Also of interest in the legislation is the explicit reference to the original 13 colonies and their leading cities of Boston, Charleston, Philadelphia and New York. In addition, the early work of the Commission has recognized that our goal to reach all Americans and each American can best be achieved by partnering with organizations that have national reach and local venues, especially the National Park System, and also partners in the Arts, Education and Entertainment industries. Advances have already been made in a number of these areas:

- The Commission chair has contacted all state governors to invite their states to participate in the America 250 celebration and offered the Commission's assistance in designing their state events and programs. A state-level director has been retained and has already begun to make follow up contact with the state governors' offices, as well as congressional offices, and Commission staff are also coordinating with the American Association for State and Local History. Conversations and planning have already begun with thirteen states. In addition, four states have already established their own America 250 state-level Commissions (NY, PA, SC, TN)
- The Commission is already collaborating with national and federal agencies on the development of their own programs and events to reinforce the key themes of Unity, Civic Engagement and Education. A federal-level director has been retained to coordinate these national and federal agencies, as required by the Public Law Act. While federal agency plan reports are not due until later this year, the Commission has recently received early briefings from:
 - The National Endowment for the Humanities
 - The National Endowment for the Arts
 - The Smithsonian Institute
 - The Department of the Interior/National Parks Service
 - The Department of Education
 - The Department of Defense
 - The National Archives
 - The Library of Congress

These agencies have already done significant thinking and design work to develop a menu of engaging and entertaining series of programs and events occurring well before and leading up to 2026. In fact, the National Endowment for the Humanities issued a press release on September 17, 2019, announcing its

America 250 commitment. That press release closely reinforced the Commission's key themes of "a more perfect union," and "all Americans," and a focus on "education and civic engagement." The Commission's visionary framework has been readily adopted by many of these agencies, based on their preliminary briefings. While too numerous to list here, these national and federal agencies have already framed national events that include: national contests for songs, books, art, poetry and food; collecting and curating "American Stories" from millions of Americans; folklife festivals across the country; traveling exhibits of historically significant documents and artifacts; special events at national parks and monuments; educational documentaries; historical symposia; museum open houses; and commemorating the "top 250" in American music, art, food, theatre, movies, books, sports. The Commission is greatly encouraged by the genuine enthusiasm with which these agencies have approached the America 250 possibilities.

- A Special Committee of the Commission has been formed and charged with researching, evaluating and recommending a menu of potential "National Signature" programs and events, as required by Public Law Act 114-196. This committee has met on multiple occasions and been briefed on other national events (e.g., the recent Apollo 13; the Rose Bowl Parade), as well as representatives from other similar commissions (e.g., the 2017 Canada 150 Commission and the City of Milan 2015 Exposition Team).
- A task force has been formed on parks, preservation and public spaces to evaluate and recommend to the Secretary of the Interior how to fully leverage the preservation and development of historic sites and battlefields as showcase venues for the America 250 commemoration, as required by Public Law Act 114-196.
- The Commission has developed guidelines and participatory frameworks for all those organizations that will elect to be an active partner in the America 250 events. These guidelines will be announced and made available publicly in parallel with the national launch of America 250 in early 2020, as well as be available on the Commission's website. We have learned from discussions with other similar commissions that clear guidelines for participation are a critical element in ensuring the quality and integrity of partner programs and events.
- The Commission has begun to consult with many other organizations on their America 250 planning, including The National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, The National Society Sons of the American Revolution, the American Association of State and Local History and PA250. Next steps will be to develop a target list of important private organizations and NGOs to begin cultivating relationships to encourage participation in America 250 (e.g., Ford Foundation, Gates Foundation, Woodrow Wilson Foundation, Brookings Institute, American Red Cross). Sponsorship, licensing and trademark opportunities need to be fully designed and pass legal scrutiny.

Status of Strategic Priority IV. Ensure Excellence in Our Execution. The Commission is committed to embodying best practices in organizational infrastructure and practice to successfully execute the strategic plan. At the same time, the Commission is very much akin to a business in its start-up phase—resources and funding must be secured, highly qualified and diverse staff and operational professionals must be recruited and retained, staff support systems must be designed (e.g., finance, accounting, legal and human resources) and a transparent and effective Commission governance structure must be put into place. Finally, the Commission must establish an organizational culture that is exemplary in its stewardship and ethical practices. The Commission has made solid progress in advancing our objectives in this area, including:

- The American Battlefield Trust was selected by the Secretary of the Interior to serve as the Administrative Secretariat for the Commission, and is providing management and administrative support and coordination to the Commission, until such time as the America 250 Foundation is fully operational.
- The governance structure of the Commission has been established with the creation of six committees: Finance, Development, Program Planning and Development, Communications and Marketing,

Government Relations and Governance. Chairs and members have been appointed, and each of these committees is active.

- The Commission has established the America 250 Foundation as the fundraising entity to support the America 250 effort and has retained professional services to establish a funding strategy to include more than 100 initially targeted companies for sponsorships, licensing and trademark agreements. Our next priority is to staff up the Foundation to achieve greater capacity. We also anticipate organizing boards and advisory committees to facilitate the participation of prominent Americans who can assist in the Foundation's fundraising efforts, while becoming active ambassadors for the America 250 celebration.
- The Commission is receiving administrative management support on budgeting and accounting services through the federal GSA offices.
- We are establishing a clearinghouse for communications and public relations under our Communications and Marketing Committee. This function will be critical to staff as it becomes operational, with one of the first tasks being the successful initial public launch of America 250 in early 2020.
- We have integrated lessons learned from our dialogue with third-party experts. For instance, we have learned from Canada 150 and Milan 2015 Exposition organizers of the primary importance of security (both physical and cyber) as we design systems and begin to plan for physical events at various venues.
- We seek to be highly participative in leading the America 250 program and event planning beyond the national programs, and to encourage innovation and creativity from our institutions, our states, our communities and individual Americans.
- We are building our staff expertise and seeking to recruit a core group of diverse, talented and committed professionals who view their role as a "calling" to the vision of America 250, rather than merely a job or next career move. The Commission is fully committed to staffing decisions that honor the diversity of America.
- The Commission must be consistently vigilant in maintaining a culture of trust, respect, transparency and ethical stewardship.

IV. SUPPORT NEEDED FROM THE WHITE HOUSE

Collaboration, endorsement and support from the White House and Congress will be crucial to a successful America 250 commemoration. As we look ahead to the next 12–24 months, our goal is to secure White House support for each of the four strategic priorities as follows:

Priority I. Create an engaging, educational and inspirational vision.

- Involvement and endorsement of the ultimate strategic plan and priorities in late 2019. It is important that the Commission's goals and programs are in sync with the White House national goals for America 250 events.
- Support and involvement in a compelling national launch of America 250 activities, ideally in early 2020. A statement of White House endorsement and support at the time of launch will provide powerful credibility and advocacy with national organizations, corporations and individual Americans.
- Support and endorsement for a congressional Caucus being formed behind America 250. This caucus currently plans to convene prior to the end of 2019. A concurrent endorsement from the White House will send an important message regarding the legitimacy of this bipartisan group.

Priority II. Build relationships and secure valued partners.

- Support for the America 250 Foundation sponsorship and fundraising activities. A White House "presence" in the messaging and overtures to be made regarding key sponsors, partners and donors will be an important endorsement in fundraising activities of the Foundation.
- Endorsement of America 250 with corporations and NGOs that are being identified as important partners in America 250 national events and programs.

Priority III. Be comprehensive in scope and both national and local in impact.

- Support and active involvement in a series of National Signature Events and Programs. The Special Committee of the Commission is currently developing an array of national events in four different categories:
 - Touring exhibitions and showcases to bring America 250 to every corner of America, traveling around the nation in the months leading up to the Semiquincentennial, generating excitement, awareness and interest to participate
 - Place-based venues where Americans are invited to convene and to interact with one another, including the possibility of a national campus to host all Americans
 - The adaptive use of national parks and other lands for events over an extended period of time during the celebration
 - An engaging series of technology-driven virtual and digital experiences that are easily accessible, informative and interactive
- Request that all federal agencies develop their own plans and fully participate in America 250 national events and programs. While the Public Law requires certain federal agencies to develop and execute their own America 250 events, encouragement to other federal agencies to enthusiastically develop and celebrate an America 250 plan would be a great source of additional momentum.
- Reinforce and encourage the active participation of all states and territories in developing and executing their own Semiquincentennial commissions and America 250 programs. In many ways, we believe that the real legacy of America 250 will be what happens at the state and local levels to build community, preserve history, educate our youth and inspire participation, pride, patriotism and understanding across our communities.
- Support to the State Department in securing broad and meaningful participation among other nations and friends of America. The 2015 Milan Universal Exposition included the active involvement and sponsorship of 145 countries, and the American Bicentennial also enjoyed significant international participation.

Priority IV. Ensure excellence in our execution.

- Support funding requests in Congress for resources needed to execute a highly visible and inspirational America 250 celebration. Once key programmatic elements have been identified by the Commission, both federal and private financial support will need to be secured to successfully execute proposed programs.
- Assign a small cadre of White House Fellows annually to assume significant roles in the design and execution of America 250 initiatives over the next seven years. This would be a meaningful engagement assignment for the Fellows, while also securing a cadre of very talented personnel to assist in America 250.

Appendix A. AMERICA 250 STATEMENT OF STRATEGIC INTENT

Vision and Purpose

“To inspire the American Spirit among all Americans and each American, based on our founding principles, on our journey to a more perfect union”

Key Themes and Goals

- ***Unity***

Each American’s individual freedom is supported by Americans acting in concert to promote the common good. Our collective strength is reflected in our democratic process and our collaborative efforts, as best expressed in our national motto: “E pluribus unum.”

- ***Civic Engagement***

Civic engagement implies that the individual freedoms we enjoy as Americans come with a responsibility and an obligation to contribute to our democracy, and at times, to make sacrifices for the greater good. Each American has the right and the duty to participate in the dialogue we call “democracy” through voting, volunteerism and community engagement and military service.

- ***Education***

Understanding the significance of our country’s founding principles requires reflection, knowledge and awareness of U.S. history and how our democracy works: who we are, where we came from and where we are headed in our community, our nation and the world. Knowledge, awareness and understanding of our nation’s founding comes through the fundamental process of education, both formal and experiential.

Four Strategic Pillars

The Commission’s work is grounded in the following strategic pillars:

I. Create an engaging, educational vision: *Not only are we commemorating the first 250 years of our democracy, we must also inspire Americans to work together in the future to preserve those founding inspirational freedoms we cherish. We will strive to create legacy initiatives that survive well beyond 2026.*

II. Build relationships and secure valued partners: *In designing the America 250 observance, we want to encourage creativity, innovation and pride across the United States in the design and execution of events and programs. This can only happen through building trusted private and public partnerships.*

III. Be comprehensive in scope, and both national and local in impact: *The goal to reach all Americans will require broad visibility of national events and programs. But the goal to reach each American will require a significant focus and customization of programs at the local level, which feature those experiences which are the most meaningful sources of pride in local communities.*

IV. Ensure excellence in our execution: *Our goal is to create meaningful experiences in which all Americans can participate and take pride. The sheer scope and scale of that goal will require the Commission to lead this effort in a way that demonstrates high standards, responsible and transparent stewardship, and exemplary ethics.*

Appendix B. Illustrative Excerpts from Commissioners' Blue Sky Essays

Unity theme

- “Americans have moved beyond deep personal discord toward more unity.”
- “As a newly registered voter exclaimed, ‘All of America stands together today!’”
- “A democracy is only as strong as its least enfranchised citizens.”
- “The commemoration successfully included every generation.”
- “The best productions also gave due attention to the ways our social and political practice fell short of our noblest professions.”
- “A celebration of, by and for the American people.”
- “A revival in national unity recognizing the contributions of our diverse peoples.”
- “*E pluribus unum*, the nation’s motto, has been restored to its rightful place.”
- “Millions of Americans coming together ... young, old and those in between.”
- “Myriad intertwining historical narratives that reflect a spirit of ‘*E pluribus unum*’ awakened a deep and personal sense of connection to the United States.”
- “Family programs involved people across generations ... library programs connected people from vastly different backgrounds and circumstances for thoughtful conversations about community needs.”
- “Communities came together to celebrate their cultural traditions and contemporary landscapes ... it mobilized a generation of students.”
- “Helped the American people understand themselves and their shared experience, while underscoring the importance of equity and inclusion.”

Civic Engagement theme

- “The 250th was a turning point that came just in time, making patriotism ‘cool.’”
- “Will the unity, patriotic spirit and civic awareness generated especially among our nation’s youth last?”
- “A record number of young people have registered to vote.”
- “The nation showed its collective pride of what it means to be American.”
- “Volunteerism has also blossomed.”
- “a rebound in patriotism has influenced attitudes toward civic participation, from voting to volunteerism.”
- “Unprecedented engagement sparks national renewal ... a renewed hope for the great American Experiment ... the renewal is just beginning”
- “Decades of diminishing voter turnout in local, state and national elections was dramatically reversed by the My VoteCounts ... local civic affairs and citizenship dramatically increased volunteerism.”
- “Many students stated that the programs ignited in them a desire to pursue higher education in the areas of history, civics, journalism, folklore, media and the arts.”
- “Substantive discussions of important civic issues that ... inspired millions of people to believe that their involvement would make a difference.”
- “The 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States served as an unexpected platform for cultivating civic engagement.”

- “Millions of Americans came together in acts of service to their neighbors and communities ... the Serve 250 effort brought tangible improvements to communities, including safer neighborhoods and healthier communities.”
- “Millions of Americans have yet again put into practice the lifeblood of democracy, the people rising up and reaching out a hand to strengthen our civic fabric ... communities worked together to serve one another ... a record number of people cast their ballots in local and national elections.”

Education theme

- “Schools, universities, think tanks all contributed their diverse outlooks.”
- “A year-long interactive digital and internet experience and exhibits for lesson plans in schools.”
- “The intense year-long focus has resulted in a more knowledgeable community of Americans.”
- “Books, plays and student essays were written and read across the country.”
- “Only 23% of 8th graders were proficient in civics and 44% of school districts had cut back time devoted to social studies.”
- “From high school AP history tests and contests, to award-winning documentaries.”
- “Nationwide, books, plays and student essays were written.”
- “After the 2026 Semiquincentennial, polls and student test scores demonstrate that student knowledge of the Declaration of Independence is at an all-time high.”
- “The 250th served as an unexpected platform ... for producing substantive scholarship and history programs ... history curricula across the country have been revised, and schools have increased instruction hours devoted to history.”
- “The Serve 250 effort brought [about] ... higher performing schools.”
- “Thousands of colleges integrated the America 250 curriculum into their civic engagement programs.”
- “Developed a national program for high school students ... students stated that the program ignited in them a desire to pursue higher education.”
- “Institutions from the Smithsonian to rural county historical societies played their part to educate a nation.”

Appendix C. America 250 Strategic Priorities and Objectives

Vision and purpose: “To inspire the American Spirit among all Americans and each American, based on our founding principles, on our journey to a more perfect union”

Engagement and Education

Priority I. Create an Engaging, Educational and Inspirational Vision

The goal of inspiring “all Americans and each American” will require a world-class communications and messaging effort. The importance of a clear, simple statement about why we celebrate the nation’s 250th will be pivotal. Not only what we are celebrating about our past and present, but also the need to look ahead to the next 250 years and emphasize how important it is that we continue to work together to preserve those things we value about our democracy. In addition, the communications, messaging and experiential events provide a great educational opportunity to promote greater knowledge and understanding of American history and civics.

Objective I.1. Create an engaging America 250 thematic architecture. The America 250 message and events must promote an enthusiasm and a call to action for each American. The themes of Unity, Civic Engagement and Education should resonate throughout our messaging and event planning. And the goal to achieve an even more perfect union should be energizing and promote civic engagement.

Objective I.2. Be fully inclusive in soliciting broad input into the America 250 design and execution. We will proactively seek input and advice from a comprehensive representation of organizations and a broad cross section of Americans in the design of programs and events for the 250th anniversary. These efforts will include surveys, focus groups, task forces and town halls.

Objective I.3. Develop and execute a comprehensive national marketing, branding and communications plan. We will create a visible, recognizable brand among all Americans about the 250th anniversary and why they should want to be personally involved. The national branding efforts should emphasize our history, as well as our aspirations for the future. The impact of the national programs and events we undertake should ultimately impact people in a personal, reflective way.

Objective I.4. Emphasize the educational opportunity in the brand messaging and event designs. America 250 provides a unique window within which to raise the level of knowledge and awareness of American history and civics among Americans of all ages. These educational opportunities present themselves in both formal and informal (edu-tainment) educational opportunities, as well as through experiential events and programs. This

category will include, but not be limited to museums, universities, schools, publishers, historians, authors, foundations and scientific institutions, think tanks and foundations.

Objective I.5. Leverage the powerful reach of the Arts and Entertainment industries in promoting national focus. We are specifically targeting a significant list of organizations in the Arts and Entertainment categories to join with us in creating and disseminating an inspirational message about America 250. These categories will include, but not be limited to, museums, sports teams and leagues, musicians/songwriters, movie studios, theatres/playwrights, authors/publishers, theme parks and media.

Priority II. Build Relationships with Valued Partners and Stakeholders

For America 250 to be of, by and for all Americans and each American, the Commission must build relationships across the country and around the world within the context of its visionary framework and participatory frameworks. The commemoration’s anticipated scope and scale require the creative involvement of a broad range of partners and stakeholders to achieve its purpose and express its themes. These relationships will involve give and take, with the Commission providing high-level leadership, guidance and support to public and private partners, and stakeholders providing a vast array programming across local, tribal, state, regional, national and international jurisdictions. The Commission will leverage these relationships to empower creative, innovative and collaborative partners and stakeholders to bring America 250 to life.

Objective II.1. Establish direct relationships with partners. The word “partner” is crucial here, implying ongoing engagement and mutual support. Partners are those having a direct relationship with the Commission/America 250 Foundation. Partners will be involved with America 250 in design, engagement and/or resource roles. The design role involves providing input to framing overall strategy and conceptualizing programs. The engagement role involves program development and implementation in direct coordination with the Commission/America 250 Foundation. The resource role involves providing money, people or tools through formal arrangements with the Commission/America 250 Foundation to support America 250 programming and operations.

Objective II.2. Support indirect relationships with America 250 stakeholders. Most America 250 stakeholders will engage indirectly with the Commission through key partners in the context of participatory frameworks. In addition, the Commission will connect with stakeholders through its ambassadors, online information clearinghouse, marketing and communications initiatives and other promotional activities.

Objective II.3. Maintain relationships with partners and stakeholders. Once established, these relationships will require ongoing engagement and communication to support broad, decentralized America 250 participation aligned with the Commission’s visionary framework.

Objective II.4. Establish the America 250 Foundation to cultivate and ensure broad participation from partners—especially those providing resources to support America 250 operations and programming.

The America 250 Foundation is the Commission’s organizational resource to spearhead a wide range of resource-raising initiatives (e.g., sponsorships, licensing arrangements, commercial activities and in-kind contributions of goods and services). The Foundation also is the Commission’s point of contact for partner and stakeholder relationship building and coordinated participatory framework execution.

Priority III. Be Comprehensive in Scope, and National and Local in Impact

The goal to reach all Americans will require compelling national visibility and scope of programs and events. The goal to reach each American will require significant focus and customization of programs and events at the local and community level. The indispensable ingredient needed to reach each American will mean events and programs that are highly experiential, requiring multiple participatory frameworks allowing people to convene and interact across various jurisdictions from international to national to local.

Objective III.1. Create and execute compelling National Signature programs to engage all Americans.

The centerpiece of the America 250th anniversary will be a series of National Signature events and programs that are the most visible to Americans on a broad scale. These events and programs, such as national touring exhibits or major events in Washington or other places of historical significance, will garner the most media and popular attention. This series of events must truly be world-class in their design and execution; places and events that allow people to convene and interact on a large scale.

Objective III.2. Collaborate with the State Department to fully engage with all international partners that want to participate. The State Department has the leading role in engaging foreign nations to invite them to join in America 250, with the Commission providing necessary support and coordination.

Objective III.3. Ensure that federal and national agencies and entities develop and execute commemorative programs. Federal agencies and entities are stewards of significant aspects of our nation's story, and together already connect each American. For example, the National Park Service, with its reach to more than 300 million visitors each year, has a unique opportunity to engage all Americans, each American and friends of America. The Commission will work with federal agencies as they pursue appropriate commemorative activities.

Objective III.4. Encourage states and territories to develop and facilitate statewide and community 250 programs. The Commission is in contact with all 50 state governors, and will be conferring with each state and territory to encourage creating its own commission to design and execute plans uniquely customized to that state's history and American connection, and facilitate the America 250 program development by communities and private organizations at the local level.

Objective III.5. Coordinate national and regional public/private programs. The Commission recognizes and will support a significant number of national and regional programs that do not fall within the scope of the other participatory frameworks. These programs may be on a grand scale, but will be initiated and led by public/private partnerships.

Priority IV. Ensure Excellence in Our Execution

Our goal is to create a meaningful experience for 350 million Americans leading up to and including 2026, as well as creating legacy initiatives beyond that time. As comprehensive a goal as that statement implies requires the Commission to organize, structure and staff itself at a world-class level. There are fundamental hallmarks of highly effective, and highly efficient, organizations that we must achieve, including the creation of a mission-driven culture that inspires the commitment and dedication of our people.

Objective IV.1. Provide effective, ethical and transparent stewardship of all resources, financial and human. We will ensure that a hallmark of our performance over the period of the Commission will be a reputation for conspicuous transparency and responsible stewardship. Nothing would jeopardize our credibility more than any lapse in ethical conduct.

Objective IV.2. Generate needed resources through innovative fundraising efforts. The America 250 Foundation will focus fundraising efforts to secure individual donors, corporate sponsors and licensing partners, while exploring other funding opportunities, including federal appropriations and bond issues.

Objective IV.3. Establish clear, enforceable federal regulations for issuing the official logo (trademark) of America 250, and for its use by the states, nonprofit charitable organizations and commercial licensing. These will be powerful resource-generating opportunities for the Commission. We will be clear and resolute regarding guidelines in these areas with organizations that choose to engage.

Objective IV.4. Collaborate with and provide oversight of the America 250 Foundation. This 501(c)3 organization will be vital to securing the needed financial resources to successfully execute a nationwide

initiative of this scale. The Commission will be responsible for ensuring that high professional and ethical standards are adhered to at the Foundation.

Objective IV.5. Establish effective external communications, public affairs and media and public relations efforts. The visibility and scope of the America 250 programs and events, as well as the sheer number of organizations involved, will require a highly effective communications capability at the Commission. Media expertise and credibility, as well as crisis management capability, will be important.

Objective IV.6. Ensure highly effective security standards are in place, both physical and cyber. Given the high-profile nature of the America 250 events, and the visibility and international notoriety of many of the individuals who will be central to the 250 events and programs, it will be critical to establish fail-safe security standards for the 250th events and programs. This includes physical security, but also information protection and cyber security.

Objective IV.7. Maintain an active, interactive website and social media platform. Coordination of activities, ability to quickly access information by key partners and the ability to poll and survey large numbers of people quickly and efficiently will require a sound technology platform.

Appendix D. Organizations who have been included in design efforts thus far

Ex Officio Agencies

1. The Department of Defense
2. The Department of Education
3. The Department of the Interior/National Parks Service
4. The Library of Congress
5. The National Archives
6. The National Endowment for the Arts
7. The National Endowment for the Humanities
8. The Smithsonian Institution

National and State Agencies

9. Advisory Council for Historic Preservation
10. Alabama Department of Archives & History
11. American Alliance of Museums
12. American Association for State and Local History
13. American Historical Association
14. American University
15. Constituting America-We the Future contest winners
16. Corporation for National and Community Service
17. Council of State Archivists
18. Federation of State Humanities Councils
19. Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance
20. Heinz History Center
21. History Made By US
22. History Relevance Initiative
23. iCivics
24. Independence National Historical Park
25. Interfaith Youth Core
26. Kentucky Historical Society
27. Maine State Archives
28. Massachusetts Historical Society/Revolution 250
29. Minnesota Historical Society
30. Minnetrista
31. National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
32. National Civil Rights Museum
33. National Coalition for History
34. National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers
35. National Council for the Social Studies
36. National Council on Public History
37. National Education Association
38. National History Day
39. National Humanities Alliance
40. National Museum of the United States Army
41. National Park Foundation
42. National Park Service-Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site/Nicodemus National Historic Site

43. National Park Service-Cultural Resource Office of Interpretation and Education
44. National Park Service-Independence National Historical Park
45. National Park Service-Minute Man National Historical Park
46. National Society Daughters of the American Revolution
47. National Society Sons of the American Revolution
48. National Trust for Historic Preservation
49. National World War II Museum
50. New Jersey Historical Commission
51. North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources
52. Organization of American Historians
53. Pennsylvania 250 Commission/PA250
54. Philadelphia Cultural Alliance
55. Rose Bowl Parade
56. Tennessee Historical Society
57. The Alexander Hamilton Awareness Society
58. The American Legion
59. The National Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation
60. The United States of America Vietnam War Commemoration
61. Thomas Jefferson's Monticello
62. United Service Organizations (USO)
63. United States Army Center of Military History
64. USA 250
65. Utah Division of State History
66. Virginia Museum of History and Culture
67. Washington State Historical Society
68. White House Historical Association

Appendix E. Appointed and Ex officio Members of the U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission

Appointed Members

Robert Casey, Senator-PA
Tom Cotton, Senator-AR
Jeanne Shaheen, Senator-NH
Pat Toomey, Senator-PA

Robert Aderholt, Representative-AL
Dwight Evans, Representative-PA
George Holding, Representative-NC
Bonnie Watson Coleman, Representative-NJ

Robert Brady, former Congressman, Pennsylvania
David Cohen, SREVP, Comcast
Val Crofts, Milton, WI High School
Daniel DiLella, Commission Chair
Cathy Gillespie, Co-chair, Constituting America
Noah Griffin, Historian, author, talk show host
Dr. Amy Gutmann, President, University of Pennsylvania
Dr. Andrew Hohns, Managing Director, Mariner Investment
James Koch, Founder, Boston Beer Company
Dr. Wilfred McClay, History Chair, University of Oklahoma
Lucas Morel, Professor of Politics, Washington & Lee University
Rosie Rios, CEO, Red River Associates; former Treasurer of the United States
James Swanson, Historian and author
Richard Trumka, President, AFL-CIO
Tom Walker, Founder, American Village Citizenship Trust
Lynn Young, Daughters of American Revolution

Ex Officio Members

Secretary of the Interior David Bernhardt
Secretary of State Mike Pompeo
Attorney General William Barr
Secretary of Defense Mark Esper
Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos
Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden
Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution Lonnie Bunch III
Archivist of the United States David Ferriero
Presiding Officer of the National Endowment for the Arts Mary Anne Carter
Presiding Officer of the National Endowment for the Humanities Jon Peede



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