
OHIO HISTORY CONNECTION

- Establishes the Ohio Commission for the United States Semiquincentennial consisting of 29 appointed members and one ex officio, nonvoting member.
- Authorizes the Commission to plan, encourage, develop, and coordinate the commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the founding of the U.S. in 2026 and the impact of Ohioans on the nation's past, present, and future.
- Requires the Commission to submit to the Governor and the General Assembly a comprehensive report that includes specific recommendations for the commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the founding of the U.S., and also to submit annual reports.
- Permits the chairperson of the Commission to appoint an executive director, who may in turn hire other personnel as necessary.
- Terminates the Commission on June 30, 2027.

Ohio Commission for the United States Semiquincentennial

(R.C. 149.309)

The act establishes the Ohio Commission for the United States Semiquincentennial for the purpose of planning the commemoration of the 250th anniversary in 2026 of the founding of the U.S., as well as Ohio's role in U.S. history before and after receiving statehood.

The Commission must consist of 29 appointed, voting members and 1 ex officio, nonvoting member. The 29 appointed members are as follows:

- Two members of the Senate;
- Two members of the House;
- The Governor's designee;
- The Chief Justice of Ohio;
- The President of the Board of Trustees of the Ohio History Connection;
- The President of the Ohio Local History Alliance's designee;
- The President of the County Commissioners Association of Ohio's designee;
- The Chairperson of the Board of the Ohio Arts Council;
- The Director of TourismOhio;
- The Executive Director of the Ohio Travel Association;
- 17 private citizens, of whom:
 - Eight must be appointed by the Governor;

- Four must be appointed by the Senate President, two of whom must be recommended by the Senate Minority Leader;
- Four must be appointed by the Speaker of the House, two of whom must be recommended by the House Minority Leader;
- One must be appointed by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Ohio.

The Governor must designate one of the private citizen members as the chairperson of the Commission and a different private citizen member as the vice chairperson.

The Executive Director or the Deputy Executive Director of the Ohio History Connection must serve as the secretary of the Commission and must be an ex officio, nonvoting member of the Commission.

Each member must serve until the Commission's expiration on June 30, 2027, unless the member no longer holds the office that qualifies the member to serve. Vacancies must be filled in the same manner as the original appointment. The members of the Commission are not entitled to compensation for service on the Commission, except for reimbursement for reasonable travel expenses.

Commission meetings must be held throughout Ohio at times and locations determined by the chairperson. A majority of the members of the Commission constitute a quorum, but a lesser number may hold hearings subject to the call of the chairperson.

The chairperson may appoint an executive director, who may in turn hire necessary staff. However, the executive director must be confirmed by an affirmative vote of a majority of the Commission's members. All Commission employees must be employees of the Ohio History Connection and must be subject to its customary personnel policies and procedures. With approval from the Commission, the executive director can authorize the Ohio History Connection to enter into contracts with vendors and consultants to undertake work in service of the Commission's public functions.

The Commission must launch and maintain an official website that is open and available for public viewing. As part of its planning process, the Commission must give due consideration to the related plans and programs developed by federal, other state, local, and private groups. Beyond these considerations, the Commission also must conduct extensive public engagement campaigns throughout Ohio to develop programs. As part of these outreach efforts, the Commission must aim to involve and showcase all counties across Ohio as part of the overall program. The costs associated with these duties, as well as the plans and overall program developed by the Commission, must be recorded by the Commission.

No later than September 30, 2022, the Commission must deliver a comprehensive report to the Governor and the General Assembly. The report must include its recommendations for the celebration of the 250th anniversary of U.S. independence, a detailed timeline of the Commission's plans and overall program, and estimates of all costs associated with the plans and overall program. The report may include recommendations for (1) legislation that will help the Commission execute its plan and overall program and (2) improvements to the infrastructure of the state or for capital projects necessary for the successful delivery of the

Commission's plan and overall program. The report must be published on the Commission's official website. The Commission can, from time to time, expand upon or revise its initial report as needed.

The Chair of the Commission may request directly from a state agency information deemed necessary by the Commission for the performance of its duties. Upon receipt of a request, the head of the state agency must provide the requested information to the Commission. The Commission also can request personnel or other supportive resources from state agencies, local governments, and public universities.

The Commission can accept, use, and dispose of gifts and donations of money, property, or personal services. The act also enables the Commission to procure supplies, services, and property, and to take necessary actions to execute the Commission's duties. The Commission can, from time to time, request operating and capital appropriations from the General Assembly to aid in the execution of the Commission's duties. Any appropriations received by the Commission will be audited by the Auditor of State in the same manner as the Ohio History Connection is audited.

In addition to the Commission's comprehensive report, it also must deliver to the Governor and General Assembly an annual report of its activities, including an accounting of funds received and expended during the year covered by the report, the outputs and outcomes achieved, and whether those achievements meet the Commission's plan and overall program. The reports must be made available on the Commission's official website.

Finally, the Commission is terminated on June 30, 2027.