

1 AN ACT establishing celebratory commissions for the Kentucky State Parks
2 centennial anniversary, the Old Fort Harrod State Park semiquincentennial anniversary,
3 and the United States semiquincentennial anniversary.

4 WHEREAS, the parks system of the Commonwealth of Kentucky will reach 100
5 years of service to the citizens of the Commonwealth in 2024; and

6 WHEREAS, since its commencement in 1924 with the creation of Cumberland
7 State Park, now known as Pine Mountain State Park, the parks system has grown to
8 include 46 resorts, recreational parks, and historic sites throughout the Commonwealth;
9 and

10 WHEREAS, the parks system provides recreational opportunities for hiking,
11 camping, boating, fishing, golfing, horseback riding, and caving within the naturally
12 beautiful landscapes of the Commonwealth; and

13 WHEREAS, the parks systems provides educational opportunities for the public to
14 experience the history of the Commonwealth; and

15 WHEREAS, the parks system has contributed to the economic well-being of the
16 Commonwealth by drawing out-of-state tourists to its lakes, trails, and campgrounds; and

17 WHEREAS, the Commonwealth would be the poorer if the Kentucky State Parks
18 system had not been established; and

19 WHEREAS, Fort Harrod was settled in 1774 by settlers led by James Harrod; and

20 WHEREAS, Fort Harrod was the first permanent pioneer settlement west of the
21 Allegheny Mountains; and

22 WHEREAS, Old Fort Harrod State Park was established in 1927 to memorialize
23 these intrepid pioneers; and

24 WHEREAS, Old Fort Harrod State Park has been a vital contributor to the
25 community and economy of Harrodsburg and Mercer County as a whole; and

26 WHEREAS, it is vital to preserve the history of the Commonwealth of Kentucky in
27 order to educate future generations of Kentuckians; and

1 WHEREAS, the years 1774 to 1776 were critical to the founding of the
2 Commonwealth of Kentucky, the creation of the Declaration of Independence, and the
3 formation of United States of America; and

4 WHEREAS, Kentuckians contributed so much to the American Revolution with
5 many Kentuckians heeding the call to arms to help secure our independence from Great
6 Britain; and

7 WHEREAS, the town of Harrodsburg, the first permanent English settlement west
8 of the Allegheny Mountains, was first settled in 1774 and will celebrate 250 years of
9 history in 2024; and

10 WHEREAS, Boone Trace, marked by Daniel Boone and his party of trailblazers in
11 1775, was the primary entrance for Europeans moving westward into what is now
12 Kentucky, creating the genesis for westward movement; and

13 WHEREAS, Native Americans, who lived in what is now Kentucky for thousands
14 of years, were catastrophically affected by this European westward expansion; and

15 WHEREAS, during this period some of the first enslaved people of African descent
16 traveled into what is now Kentucky, bringing slavery into the region for the first time; and

17 WHEREAS, the United States Semiquincentennial Commission was established to
18 provide for the observance and commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the founding
19 of the United States and related events through local, state, national, and international
20 activities, planned, encouraged, developed, and coordinated by a national commission
21 representative of appropriate public and private authorities and organizations; and

22 WHEREAS, the United States Semiquincentennial Commission has encouraged
23 states to establish state-level commissions to plan and coordinate activities within each
24 state celebrating the 250th anniversary of the nation's founding; and

25 WHEREAS, the establishment of a Kentucky Semiquincentennial Commission
26 would enhance tourism, economic development, historic appreciation, historic
27 preservation, genealogical connections, and outdoor recreation within the

1 Commonwealth;

2 NOW, THEREFORE,

3 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:*

4 ➔SECTION 1. A NEW SECTION OF KRS CHAPTER 148 IS CREATED TO
5 READ AS FOLLOWS:

6 *(1) The Kentucky State Parks Centennial Commission is established to plan and*
7 *implement events to celebrate the one hundredth anniversary of the state parks*
8 *system in 2024. To accomplish its charge, the commission shall:*

9 *(a) Assist local governments and organizations with planning, preparation, and*
10 *grant applications for parks centennial events and projects;*

11 *(b) Coordinate events and activities with parties, commissions and*
12 *organizations wishing to participate in the centennial celebration;*

13 *(c) Seek funding sources such as foundations, line items, federal grants, and*
14 *philanthropic organizations;*

15 *(d) Create press, print, and electronic contacts that generate stories on a*
16 *continual basis; and*

17 *(e) Perform other duties necessary to highlight Kentucky's parks system during*
18 *its one hundredth year.*

19 *(2) The Kentucky State Parks Centennial Commission shall consist of the following*
20 *nine (9) members:*

21 *(a) The secretary of the Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet or his or her*
22 *designee;*

23 *(b) One (1) additional member from the Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet,*
24 *appointed by the secretary;*

25 *(c) One (1) member from the Kentucky Historical Society, appointed by the*
26 *executive director of the society;*

27 *(d) One (1) member from the Kentucky Heritage Council, appointed by the*

- 1 state historic preservation officer;
2 (e) Three (3) members selected by the secretary of the Tourism, Arts and
3 Heritage Cabinet who work in onsite park leadership; and
4 (f) Two (2) citizen members, one (1) of whom shall be designated as the
5 chairperson and appointed by the Governor.
6 (3) The Kentucky State Parks Centennial Commission shall be attached to the
7 Kentucky Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet for administrative purposes only.
8 (4) This section shall expire on December 31, 2024.

9 ➔SECTION 2. A NEW SECTION OF KRS CHAPTER 148 IS CREATED TO
10 READ AS FOLLOWS:

- 11 (1) As used in this section:
12 (a) "Commission" means the Old Fort Harrod State Park Semiquincentennial
13 Commission established in subsection (2) of this section; and
14 (b) "Semiquincentennial" means a two hundred fiftieth anniversary.
15 (2) The Old Fort Harrod State Park Semiquincentennial Commission is hereby
16 established to plan and implement events to celebrate the two hundred fiftieth
17 anniversary of Old Fort Harrod in 2024. To accomplish its charge, the
18 commission shall:
19 (a) Ensure that adequate way-finding signage and mapping is accomplished to
20 mark and identify Old Fort Harrod State Park;
21 (b) Educate citizens of the Commonwealth and the nation about the stories of
22 pioneers and Native Americans in the early days of westward settlement and
23 the impact Fort Harrod and settlements of its nature had on Kentucky and
24 American history;
25 (c) Plan and implement events for a year-long semiquincentennial
26 commemoration in the year 2024 of the founding of Fort Harrod and
27 whatever subsequent events in the immediately preceding and following

- 1 years deemed appropriate by the commission, including any battlefield
2 commemorations if funds are available;
- 3 (d) Assist local governments with planning, preparation, and grant applications
4 for semiquincentennial events and projects;
- 5 (e) Coordinate federal, state, local, and nonprofit organizations'
6 semiquincentennial activities occurring in Kentucky;
- 7 (f) Coordinate events and activities with parties, commissions, and
8 organizations wishing to participate in the 2024 commemoration;
- 9 (g) Act as a point of contact for national organizations wishing to distribute
10 information to state and local groups about grant opportunities, meetings,
11 and national events related to the settlement of Fort Harrod and
12 semiquincentennial activities;
- 13 (h) Seek funding sources such as foundations, line items, federal grants,
14 philanthropic organizations, and lineage societies;
- 15 (i) Create press, print, and electronic contacts that generate stories on a
16 continual basis;
- 17 (j) Encourage and contract new publications and create a call for papers on
18 Fort Harrod, James Harrod, or other participating or involved parties, and
19 how the history of this early frontier settlement impacted American history;
- 20 (k) Organize symposiums and other methodologies to investigate genealogy
21 relative to Fort Harrod;
- 22 (l) Create higher and lower educational programs; and
- 23 (m) Perform other duties necessary to educate Kentuckians on the history of
24 Fort Harrod and early frontier settlements and on the Commonwealth's
25 role in early westward expansion.
- 26 (3) The commission shall consist of the following nine (9) members:
- 27 (a) The secretary of the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet or his

- 1 or her designee;
- 2 (b) Two (2) members from the Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet;
- 3 (c) One (1) member from the Kentucky Heritage Council, appointed by the
- 4 state historic preservation officer;
- 5 (d) One (1) member of the Kentucky Humanities Council, appointed by the
- 6 chair of the council;
- 7 (e) One (1) member of the Friends of Fort Harrod, recommended by the leader
- 8 of that organization and appointed by the Governor; and
- 9 (f) Three (3) citizen members appointed by the Governor, one (1) of whom
- 10 shall be designated as the chairperson.
- 11 (4) The Old Fort Harrod State Park Semiquincentennial Commission shall be
- 12 attached to the Kentucky Historical Society for administrative purposes only.
- 13 (5) This section shall expire on January 1, 2027.

14 ➔SECTION 3. A NEW SECTION OF KRS CHAPTER 148 IS CREATED TO

15 READ AS FOLLOWS:

- 16 (1) As used in this section:
- 17 (a) "Commission" means the Kentucky Semiquincentennial Commission
- 18 established in subsection (2) of this section; and
- 19 (b) "Semiquincentennial" means a two hundred fiftieth anniversary.
- 20 (2) The Kentucky Semiquincentennial Commission is hereby established to plan and
- 21 implement events to celebrate the two hundred fiftieth anniversary of the United
- 22 States in 2026. To accomplish its charge, the commission shall:
- 23 (a) Elect a chair of the commission and have the authority to form
- 24 subcommittees and working groups that include non-commission members
- 25 in order to plan, develop, and coordinate specific activities;
- 26 (b) Plan, encourage, develop, and coordinate the commemoration of the two
- 27 hundred fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the United States in 2026,

1 and recognize Kentucky's integral role in that event and the impact of its
2 people on the nation's past, present, and future;

3 (c) Educate Kentucky residents about the importance of the years 1774, 1775,
4 and 1776 to the history of our state and nation, the importance of Boone
5 Trace and the impact of the opening of the west, and how westward
6 expansion affected Native Americans in what is now Kentucky;

7 (d) Assist local governments and organizations with planning
8 semiquincentennial events and projects in their communities that
9 commemorate the importance of 1774, 1775, and 1776 in our state and
10 nation's history;

11 (e) Coordinate federal, state, local, and nonprofit organizations'
12 semiquincentennial activities occurring in Kentucky;

13 (f) Act as a point of contact for national organizations wishing to distribute
14 information to state and local groups about grant opportunities, meetings,
15 and national events related to semiquincentennial activities;

16 (g) Seek funding sources such as foundations, line items, federal grants,
17 philanthropic organizations, and lineage societies;

18 (h) Work with state and local partners to promote activities related to the
19 semiquincentennial and, if deemed appropriate, any battlefield
20 commemorations if funds are available; and

21 (i) Perform other duties necessary to highlight the importance of the years
22 1774, 1775, and 1776 to Kentucky history.

23 (3) The commission shall consist of the following eleven (11) members:

24 (a) Three (3) citizen members appointed by the Governor;

25 (b) The secretary of the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet or his
26 or her designee;

27 (c) Two (2) members from the Tourism, Arts, and Heritage Cabinet appointed

- 1 by the secretary of the cabinet;
- 2 (d) One (1) member from the Kentucky Historical Society appointed by the
- 3 executive director of the society;
- 4 (e) One (1) member from the Kentucky Heritage Council appointed by the state
- 5 historic preservation officer;
- 6 (f) One (1) member from the Kentucky Native American Heritage Commission
- 7 appointed by the chair of the Kentucky Native American Heritage
- 8 Commission;
- 9 (g) One (1) member from the Kentucky African American Heritage
- 10 Commission appointed by the chair of the Kentucky African American
- 11 Heritage Commission; and
- 12 (h) The president of Friends of Boone Trace, Inc., or his or her designee.
- 13 (4) The commission shall be attached to the Kentucky Historical Society for
- 14 administrative purposes only.
- 15 (5) This section shall expire on January 1, 2027.

16 ➔Section 4. Section 1 of this Act, as codified following the 2021 Regular Session
 17 of the Kentucky General Assembly, shall be repealed effective December 31, 2024.
 18 Sections 2 and 3 of this Act, as codified following the 2021 Regular Session of the
 19 Kentucky General Assembly, shall be repealed effective January 1, 2027.