

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 5756

Brief Description: Establishing the semiquincentennial committee.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on State Government & Elections (originally sponsored by Senators Hunt, Muzzall and Conway; by request of Lieutenant Governor, Washington State Historical Society).

Senate Committee on State Government & Elections
House Committee on State Government & Tribal Relations

Background: The Second Continental Congress, a meeting of delegates from the thirteen colonies, voted for the independence of the United States on July 2, 1776, in Philadelphia. The Declaration of Independence was approved by Congress on July 4, the date on which the anniversary of independence is observed.

Congress enacted the United States Semiquincentennial Commission Act of 2016 to establish a commission to plan, develop, and coordinate the commemoration of United States history leading up to the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States on July 4, 2026, as marked by the Declaration of Independence in 1776. The legislation specifically directs the organization of events in locations of historical significance to the United States.

Summary: The Semiquincentennial Committee (Committee) of 20 members is established to coordinate and provide guidance for Washington's official observance of the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States, as marked by the Declaration of Independence in 1776.

The Lieutenant Governor will serve as the chair of the Committee. The Washington State Historical Society (WSHS) will provide administrative support to the Committee. The WSHS may employ personnel, contract for services, and receive, expend, and allocate gifts, grants, and donations on behalf of the Committee.

The Semiquincentennial Account is created. The account is subject to allotment procedures, but an appropriation is not required for expenditures. The Lieutenant Governor and the director of the WSHS may authorize expenditures from the account.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Committee Members. The Committee will include the following members:

- one member from each of the two largest caucuses of the Senate, appointed by the President of the Senate;
- one member from each of the two largest caucuses of the House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;
- the Lieutenant Governor, or their designee;
- the Secretary of State, or their designee;
- the Superintendent of Public Instruction, or their designee;
- the director, or their designee, for the following agencies: Governor's Office of Indian Affairs; WSHS; Eastern Washington State Historical Society; Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation; Washington State Parks; Department of Commerce; and Washington State Arts Commission;
- one member selected by each of the following: the Commission on African American Affairs; the Commission on Asian American Affairs; the Commission on Hispanic Affairs; the LGBTQ Commission; and the Women's Commission; and
- one member representing Humanities Washington, appointed by the Governor.

The Committee may invite additional persons necessary to serve as honorary members.

Committee Duties. The Committee must submit a yearly report of its activities to the Legislature. The Committee may:

- cooperate with national, regional, statewide, and local entities promoting the semiquincentennial;
- assist, plan, or conduct semiquincentennial events;
- support, plan, or produce educational resources and programs related to the semiquincentennial;
- engage in or encourage fundraising activities including revenue-generating enterprises, as well as the solicitation of charitable gifts, grants, or donations;
- coordinate interagency participation in the observance;
- create subcommittees comprised of committee members, honorary members, and community members to further the goals of the Committee; and
- perform other related duties.

The act expires June 30, 2027.

Votes on Final Passage:

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| Senate | 47 | 0 |
| House | 70 | 26 |

Effective: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.