



U.S. SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL COMMISSION

Testimony on:

House Bill 2353, An Act Establishing the Kansas Commission for
the United States Semiquincentennial

Submitted to:

The Kansas House Committee on Appropriations
February, 2021

Submitted By:

Daniel M. DiLella
Chairman
United States Semiquincentennial Commission

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Chairman Waymaster, Ranking Member Moore, and Members of the Committee –

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony regarding House Bill 2353, which would create a Kansas commission for the United States Semiquincentennial in order to plan and coordinate, within the state of Kansas, the commemoration of 250 years since the United States declared independence.

My name is Dan DiLella. I have the honor of serving as Chairman of the United States Semiquincentennial Commission, which was established by Congress to lead the nationwide commemoration of this historic anniversary and to inspire each and every American to participate in our country's greatest milestone yet.

The 250th anniversary of our nation's founding provides an unparalleled opportunity to reflect on the great American Experiment and to Educate, Engage, and Unite Americans throughout the country and our friends around the world. In anticipation of this milestone in 2026, the U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission will work with public and private entities across the country with the goal of orchestrating the largest and most inclusive anniversary observance in our nation's history.

This initiative, which will be referred to commonly as "America 250," anticipates nearly 125,000 programs—the vast majority of which will be state- and territory-led initiatives—resulting in billions of dollars in resources that will ripple through our local, state, territorial, and national economies.

State- and territorial-level involvement is the Commission's top priority, and the Commission plans to work in full partnership with each state's official Semiquincentennial entity in order to support planning efforts across the country. Several states have already created Semiquincentennial entities to administer and organize their America 250 programming, and many others are in the process of doing so. Through those commissions and their programs, states will be highlighting the contributions that they and their citizens have made to American history and culture since America's founding.

The Commission is encouraged to see that the Kansas legislature is considering HB 2353 to establish its own commission for participation in this once-in-a-lifetime commemoration.

The U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission stands ready to partner with you to achieve our shared goals over the next several years. We look forward to the establishment of Kansas' commission and to working with you—as we are with other states that have active commissions—to engage Kansans and to honor your state's unique story and contributions during this historic moment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. DiLella", written over a horizontal line.

Daniel M. DiLella
Chairman, U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission