

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

1st Session of the 59th Legislature (2023)

SENATE BILL 944

By: Pugh

AS INTRODUCED

An Act relating to the Semiquincentennial of the United States; creating the Oklahoma Semiquincentennial Commission; providing sunset date; providing for duties of the Commission; providing for membership; providing deadline for appointments and first meeting; providing for staffing; declaring quorum; allowing travel expense reimbursement; declaring certain authorization; requiring report; creating the Semiquincentennial Revolving Fund; providing sunset date; transferring remaining monies after sunset date; providing for codification; and declaring an emergency.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 500 of Title 53, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. There is hereby created the Oklahoma Semiquincentennial Commission until June 30, 2027.

B. The duties of the Commission shall be as follows:

1. Be the point of contact for state and national organizations and events related to the Semiquincentennial of the United States;

1 2. Develop programs and plans for the official observance of
2 the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States in 2026,
3 as marked by the Declaration of Independence in 1776; and

4 3. Cooperate with the United States Semiquincentennial
5 Commission and various state agencies, boards, commissions,
6 departments, and political subdivisions in order to execute
7 commemorative events and to implement educational activities,
8 events, and celebrations related to the Semiquincentennial of the
9 United States.

10 C. The Commission shall be composed of twenty-five (25)
11 members. The members shall serve as follows:

12 1. The Lieutenant Governor, who shall serve as chairperson of
13 the Commission;

14 2. The Executive Director of the Oklahoma Historical Society,
15 or designee, who shall serve as vice chairperson of the Commission;

16 3. The Executive Director of Oklahoma Department of Commerce,
17 or designee, who shall be an employee of the agency;

18 4. The Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State
19 Department of Education, or designee, who shall be an employee of
20 the agency;

21 5. The Chancellor of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher
22 Education, or designee, who shall be an employee of the agency;

23 6. The Executive Director of the Oklahoma Arts Council, or
24 designee, who is an employee of the agency;

- 1 7. The Executive Director of the Oklahoma Department of Tourism
2 and Recreation, or designee, who shall be an employee of the agency;
- 3 8. The Regent of the Oklahoma Society Daughters of the American
4 Revolution;
- 5 9. The President of the Oklahoma Society of the Sons of the
6 American Revolution;
- 7 10. The Executive Director of the Oklahoma Museums Association;
- 8 11. The Executive Director of the Gilcrease Museum;
- 9 12. The Executive Director of the First Americans Museum;
- 10 13. The President of the National Cowboy and Western Heritage
11 Museum;
- 12 14. The Executive Director of Oklahoma Humanities;
- 13 15. The President of the Oklahoma City National Memorial and
14 Museum;
- 15 16. The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, or a designee, who
16 shall be an employee of the court;
- 17 17. One member, appointed by the Governor, who shall be a
18 member with experience in the study and documentation of the history
19 of Black communities in Oklahoma;
- 20 18. One member, appointed by the Governor, who shall be a
21 member with experience in the study and documentation of the history
22 of Latino communities in Oklahoma;
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1 19. One member, appointed by the Governor, who shall be a
2 member with experience in the study and documentation of the history
3 of American Indian communities in Oklahoma;

4 20. One member, appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the
5 Senate, who shall be a current member of the Senate from the
6 majority party;

7 21. One member, appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the
8 Senate, who shall be a current member of the Senate from the
9 minority party;

10 22. One member, appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the
11 Senate, who shall be a secondary teacher currently certified to
12 teach United States history in Oklahoma;

13 23. One member, appointed by the Speaker of the House of
14 Representatives, who shall be a current member of the House of
15 Representatives from the majority party;

16 24. One member, appointed by the Speaker of the House of
17 Representatives, who shall be a current member of the House of
18 Representatives from the minority party; and

19 25. One member, appointed by the Speaker of the House of
20 Representatives, who shall be a current fifth grade teacher
21 currently certified to teach in Oklahoma with experience teaching
22 United States history.

23 D. Commission members may be removed for cause. Whenever a
24 vacancy on the Commission occurs by death, resignation, or

1 otherwise, the appointing authority shall fill the same by
2 appointment, and the appointee shall hold office during the
3 unexpired term. Each member shall hold office until a successor has
4 been appointed.

5 E. All appointments to the Commission shall be made no later
6 than August 1, 2023. The Commission shall hold its first meeting no
7 later than September 1, 2023. The Commission shall be staffed by
8 the Oklahoma Historical Society. All appropriate agencies of state
9 government shall provide assistance to the Commission upon request
10 of the Commission.

11 F. A quorum of thirteen members shall be required to conduct
12 official business of the Commission. The Commission may establish
13 subcommittees to effectuate the purpose the Commission. The
14 Commission shall meet as often as necessary to perform its duties.

15 G. Members of the Commission shall receive no compensation for
16 serving on the Commission but shall receive travel reimbursement for
17 necessary travel expenses incurred in the performance of their
18 duties by their respective agencies in accordance with the State
19 Travel Reimbursement Act.

20 H. The Commission shall be authorized to:

- 21 a. employ personnel,
 - 22 b. contract for services, and
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1 c. accept gifts, grants, and donations which shall be
2 deposited into the Semiquincentennial Revolving Fund,
3 created in Section 2 of this act.

4 I. On or after June 30, 2027, any remaining supplies or
5 property of the Commission shall transfer to the Oklahoma Historical
6 Society.

7 J. No later than March 1, 2024, the Commission shall
8 electronically submit a report to the Governor, President Pro
9 Tempore of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of
10 Representatives to include the following information:

- 11 1. Mission statement of the Commission;
- 12 2. Goals of the Commission;
- 13 3. List of proposed activities;
- 14 4. List of milestones along with applicable dates for executing
15 the proposed activities; and
- 16 5. Projected budget for planned activities and private
17 fundraising goals.

18 SECTION 2. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
19 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 501 of Title 53, unless there is
20 created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

21 There is hereby created in the State Treasury a revolving fund
22 for the Oklahoma Historical Society to be designated the
23 "Semiquincentennial Revolving Fund". The fund shall be a continuing
24 fund, not subject to fiscal year limitations, and shall consist of

1 all monies received from legislative appropriations, private
2 donations, gifts, and grants. All monies accruing to the credit of
3 the fund are hereby appropriated and may be budgeted and expended by
4 the Oklahoma Semiquincentennial Commission for the purposes of the
5 Commission. Expenditures from the fund shall be made upon warrants
6 issued by the State Treasurer against claims filed as prescribed by
7 law with the Director of the Office of Management and Enterprise
8 Services for approval and payment. The Semiquincentennial Revolving
9 Fund shall sunset on June 30, 2027. Any remaining monies in the
10 fund shall transfer to the Historical Society Revolving Fund,
11 created in Section 1.10 of Title 53 of the Oklahoma Statutes.

12 SECTION 3. It being immediately necessary for the preservation
13 of the public peace, health or safety, an emergency is hereby
14 declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and
15 be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

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