

Legislation Text

File #: 161021, **Version:** 0

Authorizing the Joint Committees on Commerce and Economic Development and Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs to hold public hearings to consider and make recommendations on how the City of Philadelphia should prepare to host America's 250th Anniversary in 2026.

WHEREAS, In March 2015, in Resolution #150248, Council recognized the planning efforts by the nonprofit organization USA250 to plan for America's 250th Anniversary, and proposed for Philadelphia to serve as the host for its celebration in 2026, a moment to reflect upon our history and contemplate our future progress; and

WHEREAS, Council re-affirms Philadelphia's important history not only as the birthplace of the United States, but also as host to the major national anniversary celebrations thereafter, including the 1876 and 1926 world's fairs, 1976 Bicentennial, and 1987 We the People celebration the Constitution's 200th Anniversary; and

WHEREAS, Council notes in particular the broad impact that American's anniversary celebrations have had in the establishment and growth of the many artistic, cultural, and historical institutions in Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, In July 2016, the United States Congress passed Public Law No. 114-196, US Semiquincentennial Commission Act, signed by the President on July 22, 2016; with co-sponsorship at passage by several members of the Pennsylvania delegation including U.S. Senators Casey and Toomey and U.S. Representatives Brady, Boyle, Costello, and Meehan establishing a national commission to plan, develop and coordinate the commemoration and observance of the founding of the U.S. and its history leading up to its 250th Anniversary; and

WHEREAS, By law the Commission shall convene at Independence Hall in Philadelphia, and its membership shall be comprised of 4 members of the Senate, 4 members of the House of Representatives, and 16 private citizens appointed by Congress, as well as 9 ex-officio members including the Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, Secretary of Education, Attorney General, the Secretary of the Smithsonian, the Archivist of the United States and the Librarian of Congress; and

WHEREAS, The Act requires a report by the new Commission with recommendations for the President and Congress in July 2018, after soliciting proposals from municipalities, states, citizens, and private interests for how the United States should celebrate its 250th; and

WHEREAS, USA250 seeks the support of Council and City officials to develop a bid proposal to the Commission by the end of December 2017, with sufficient advance time for receipt and full consideration before the July 2018 deadline; and

WHEREAS, Plans for major events like the Semiquincentennial, such as the Olympic Games or World's Fair, require 10 or more years of advance thinking and public engagement to ensure success; and

WHEREAS, Council applauds USA250's vision that Philadelphia should once again provide leadership to attract all 50 states and millions of Americans to participate in the nation's 250th Anniversary celebration in

2026, as expressed through a series of world-class events, meetings and exhibitions woven together by our common heritage and shared future, now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That Council does hereby authorize the Joint Committees on Commerce and Economic Development and Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs to hold public hearings to consider and make recommendations on how the City of Philadelphia should prepare to host America's 250th Anniversary in 2026.