

Legislation Text

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Supporting USA250's efforts to make Philadelphia the home of our nation's 250th Anniversary in 2026

WHEREAS, The Centennial International Exhibition of 1876, the first official World's Fair in America, was held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, from May 10 to November 10, 1876, to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Approximately 10 million visitors attended the Centennial International Exhibition, equivalent to 25% of the population of the United States; and

WHEREAS, The Centennial engaged the world around the leading artistic, commercial, and agricultural advancements of that era. Adapting these concepts to today, USA250 is researching traditional World Expo guidelines while also exploring alternative program models; and

WHEREAS, The International Exposition of 1926 was a world's fair in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the signing of the United States Declaration of Independence, and the 50th anniversary of the 1876 Centennial Exposition. The fair drew about 10 million visitors; and

WHEREAS, In celebration of our nation's Bicentennial, Philadelphia was selected to host the 1976 NBA All-Star Game, the 1976 National Hockey League All-Star Game, the 1976 NCAA Final Four, and the 1976 Major League Baseball All-Star Game at which President Ford threw out the first pitch. In July of 1976, Philadelphia hosted Queen Elizabeth II of Great Britain, presenting a Bicentennial Bell made in the same foundry as the original Liberty Bell; and

WHEREAS, The African American Museum in Philadelphia, the Museum of American Jewish History, and the Mummies Museum were established in 1976 in connection with the Bicentennial; and

WHEREAS, In 2000, Philadelphia hosted the Republican National Convention. The convention yielded \$345 million in total sales, produced the equivalent of 4,777 full-time jobs and \$167 million in personal income; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia will soon welcome the Pope during the 2015 World Meeting of Families along with the 2016 Democratic National Convention; and

WHEREAS, The New York Times has named Philadelphia the top U.S. destination in 2015; and

WHEREAS, USA250's vision is that Philadelphians will provide leadership to attract all 50 states and millions of Americans to participate in the nation's 250th in 2026: a series of world-class events, meetings and exhibitions woven together by our common heritage and shared future; and

WHEREAS, USA250 has engaged business, cultural, and civic leaders throughout Greater Philadelphia to once again answer the call to imagine, plan, and convene our national celebration, taking full advantage of the economic and cultural opportunities presented by our nation's 250th Anniversary; and

WHEREAS, USA250 is building consensus around this shared vision by articulating best-practice models for

the 250th, pursuing 2026 major event commitments, and expanding the team of area leaders involved with the initiative; and;

WHEREAS, USA250's outreach process has included the engagement of hundreds of local citizens, inspiring the organization to develop a thematic plan around America's founding values of Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That Council does hereby support USA250's efforts to make Philadelphia the home of our Nation's 250th Anniversary in 2026.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to USA250 as evidence of the sincere sentiments of this legislative body.