



January 31, 2022

Senator Mike Foote, Chair
State, Veterans and Military Affairs Committee
Colorado State Legislature

Dear Sen. Foote and Members of the State, Veterans and Military Affairs Committee:

On behalf of the American Association for State and Local History, I am writing to express our support for SB22-011, which would establish the state's America 250 / Colorado 150 Commission.

The American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) is a national professional association providing leadership and resources to the history museums, historical societies, and history professionals who help preserve history and make the past more meaningful for all Americans. Since 2017, AASLH has led the history community's efforts to prepare for the U.S. 250th Anniversary in 2026. We believe that history provides an essential foundation for our civic community and that the "Semiquincentennial" anniversary offers a once-in-a-generation opportunity for every American to reflect upon, reckon with, and learn from our shared past.

State-level Semiquincentennial commissions will play a critical role in the lead-up to the 250th anniversary, guiding and coordinating the work of historians and history institutions as they help Americans gain a fuller understanding of the past. The U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission created by Congress in 2016 has made clear that the decentralized, grassroots-driven commemoration program they envision will rely heavily on state commissions like the one SB22-011 would create. More than 20 other states have already established similar commissions or official entities, with nearly a dozen other states already considering establishing similar commissions already in 2022. Establishing a Semiquincentennial commission in Colorado will strengthen connections between the state's historical community and national commemoration stakeholders and will ensure the state's more than 400 historical organizations receive appropriate guidance and access to funding as they prepare for 2026. The 250th anniversary offers an unparalleled opportunity for people to connect with history in ways that strengthen our civic fabric, and state Semiquincentennial commissions will play an important role in that process.

Thank you for your consideration and your recognition of history's value in American life.

Sincerely,

John R. Dichtl
President & CEO
American Association for State and Local History