

SB23-297

America 250 Colorado 150 Commission

Concerning the expansion of the America 250 - Colorado 150 commission, and, in connection therewith, making an appropriation. 2023 Regular Session State Government

The act expands the America 250 - Colorado 150 commission (commission), created in 2022 within the state historical society (History Colorado), from 11 to 15 voting members, adding 4 additional members to be appointed by the governor no later than October 1, 2023. The act appropriates \$500,000 for the 2023-24 state fiscal year from the general fund to the department of higher education for use by History Colorado to support the activities of the commission in developing programs and plans for the official observance of the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States and the 150th anniversary of Colorado statehood. Any unexpended amount of the \$500,000 appropriation is further appropriated to the department of education for the same purpose through state fiscal year 2026-27.

APPROVED by Governor June 6, 2023

EFFECTIVE June 6, 2023

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as enacted.)

History Colorado is currently home to the America 250-Colorado 150 commission, which will develop and plan programs for the official observance of both the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States and the 150th anniversary of Colorado's statehood. Both of these occur in 2026.

The session began with a brief presentation from Katie Roach, History Colorado's program director. Roach said that the goal of the session was to "hear from community members and begin conversations about what you want to see for these celebrations."

Roach explained that the themes for planning are to celebrate, educate, preserve and experience. Celebrate and experience are, according to Roach, an important distinction, because there are parts of Colorado's history that need to be remembered, but not celebrated.

On September 28, 4:00pm-5:30pm at the La Plata County Fairgrounds Exhibition Hall, Katie Roach, History Colorado's program director, will meet with interested citizens and a local organizing committee (LOC) to discuss the state's participation in the America 250-Colorado celebration. Anyone interested in learning more or participating in the planning for this national and statewide celebration in 2026 is welcome to attend.

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"The mission of America 250 - Colorado 150 is to celebrate the nation's creation and Colorado statehood by acknowledging our shared history, honoring that which makes Colorado unique, and striving toward a harmonious future.

As part of Colorado's participation in this commemoration, the state has been organized into a number of regions. Much of the Western Slope is contained in the Mountains and Mesas (M&M) region which, in turn, has formed a local organizing committee (LOC). This committee will coordinate and guide an array of events and exhibits that will celebrate, educate, preserve, and provide experiences that showcase our rich history and future. The M&M LOC is made up of 13 counties with 53 cities and towns across the Western Slope. We welcome input and ideas for events and activities that will honor both our nation and state's rich histories."