

1 AN ACT relating to the establishment of the 1775 Semiquincentennial Anniversary
2 Commission.

3 WHEREAS, the mindset of the pioneers of the late 18th century was to break free
4 from British tyranny and go west to acquire land of their own; and

5 WHEREAS, the Appalachian Mountains and the wilderness to the west were
6 considered a formidable barrier to westward migration; and

7 WHEREAS, Boone Trace, marked by Daniel Boone and his party of trailblazers in
8 1775, was the first trail into the land that was to become Kentucky, specifically for the
9 purpose of bringing in settlers; and

10 WHEREAS, the opening of "that little road" created a turning point in history,
11 allowing Americans to escape subservience, move west, claim land and succeed; and

12 WHEREAS, as many as 200,000 people travelled across the Cumberland Gap on
13 part or all of Boone Trace in the first 20 years it was open, many of whom settled in
14 Kentucky; and

15 WHEREAS, no other trail is of greater historical significance to the founding of
16 Kentucky and the opening of the west; and

17 WHEREAS, the early settlers showed undaunted courage, determination,
18 persistence, and skill; and

19 WHEREAS, the "American Spirit" to dream a dream, seek it, achieve it, and
20 triumph was born, in large part, because of this early westward movement; and

21 WHEREAS, that "Spirit" lives even today; and

22 WHEREAS, remnants of early routes into Kentucky exist today and have been
23 declared by the Kentucky General Assembly to be worthy of being further identified,
24 protected, marked, and made accessible to the public. In doing so, the citizens of the
25 Commonwealth will enjoy future economic, health, conservation, and community
26 benefits; and

27 WHEREAS, The 1775 Semiquincentennial Commission is established in order to

1 enhance tourism, economic development, historic appreciation, genealogical connections,
2 and outdoor recreation within the Commonwealth;

3 NOW, THEREFORE,

4 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:*

5 ➔Section 1. A NEW SECTION OF KRS CHAPTER 148 IS CREATED TO
6 READ AS FOLLOWS:

7 (1) As used in this section:

8 (a) "Commission" means the 1775 Semiquincentennial Anniversary
9 Commission established in subsection (2) of this section; and

10 (b) "Semiquincentennial" means the two hundred fiftieth anniversary of the
11 opening of Boone Trace in 1775 and the genesis of the westward movement.

12 (2) The 1775 Semiquincentennial Anniversary Commission is hereby established and
13 attached to the Kentucky Historical Society for administrative purposes only.

14 (3) The commission shall consist of the following sixteen (16) members:

15 (a) Two (2) members of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker
16 of the House, who shall serve as ex officio nonvoting members;

17 (b) Two (2) members of the Senate appointed by the President of the Senate,
18 who shall serve as ex officio nonvoting members;

19 (c) The secretary of the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet or his
20 or her designee;

21 (d) Two (2) members from the Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet appointed
22 by secretary of the cabinet;

23 (e) One (1) member from the Kentucky Historical Society appointed by the
24 executive director of the society;

25 (f) One (1) member from the Kentucky Heritage Council appointed by the state
26 historic preservation officer;

27 (g) One (1) member from the Kentucky Humanities Council appointed by the

1 chair of the council;

2 (h) One (1) member from the Kentucky Native American Heritage Commission
3 appointed by the chair of the Kentucky Native American Heritage
4 Commission;

5 (i) One (1) member from the Kentucky African-American Heritage
6 Commission appointed by the chair of the Kentucky African-American
7 Heritage Commission;

8 (j) The president of Friends of Boone Trace, Inc. or his or her designee; and

9 (k) Three (3) citizen members appointed by the Governor, one (1) of whom
10 shall be designated as the chair of the commission by the Governor.

11 (4) The commission shall:

12 (a) Ensure that adequate way-finding signage and mapping is accomplished to
13 mark and identify The Warrior's Path, Skagg's Trace, Boone Trace and
14 The Wilderness Road trails, as they are the four (4) major early trails that
15 entered the land that was to become Kentucky;

16 (b) Educate Kentucky residents and the nation about the genesis of the
17 westward movement beginning in 1775 and its impact on the opening of the
18 west and the founding of Kentucky County of Virginia in 1777 which led to
19 creation of the Commonwealth of Kentucky;

20 (c) Plan and implement events for a year-long semiquincentennial
21 commemoration in the year 2025 of the westward movement which began in
22 1775 and events in the immediate preceding years if appropriate;

23 (d) Assist local governments and organizations with planning, preparation, and
24 grant applications for semiquincentennial events and projects;

25 (e) Coordinate federal, state, local, and nonprofit organizations'
26 semiquincentennial activities occurring in Kentucky;

27 (f) Coordinate events and activities with parties, commissions, and

- 1 organizations wishing to participate in the 2025 commemoration;
2 (g) Act as a point of contact for national organizations wishing to distribute
3 information to state and local groups about grant opportunities, meetings,
4 and national events related to the development of the Boone Trace trail
5 system and semiquincentennial activities;
6 (h) Seek funding sources such as foundations, line items, federal grants,
7 philanthropic organizations, and lineage societies;
8 (i) Create press, print and electronic contacts that generate stories on a
9 continual basis;
10 (j) Encourage and contract new publications and create a call for papers on
11 the westward expansion, and Boone's values and characteristics of
12 leadership that impact the American Spirit of Freedom and current values;
13 (k) Organize symposiums and other methodologies to investigate genealogy
14 relative to Boone's Trace and The Wilderness Road;
15 (l) Create higher and lower educational programs;
16 (m) Establish Boone Trace Scenic Byway; and
17 (n) Perform other duties necessary to highlight Kentucky's role in the western
18 movement.

19 (5) This section shall expire on January 1, 2027.

20 ➔Section 2. Section 1 of this Act, as codified following the 2020 Regular Session
21 of the Kentucky General Assembly, shall be repealed effective January 1, 2027.