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Commemorative Commissions: Overview, Structure, and Funding

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Summary

Commemorative commissions are entities established to oversee the commemoration of a person or event. These commissions typically coordinate celebrations, scholarly events, public gatherings, and other activities, often to coincide with a milestone anniversary. For example, the Christopher Columbus Quincentenary Jubilee Commission was created "to prepare a comprehensive program for commemorating the quincentennial of the voyages of discovery of Christopher Columbus, and to plan, encourage, coordinate, and conduct observances and activities commemorating the historic events associated with those voyages."

Using a dataset of all commemorative commissions created by statute since the 96th Congress (1979-1980), this report examines the content of typical legislative language used to create commemorative commissions and how commemorative commissions are funded. This report does not address noncommemorative congressional commissions, nor does it address commemorative entities created by the President or statutory commissions tasked with designing and building monuments and memorials in Washington, DC.

Statutes establishing commemorative commissions generally include language that states the mandate of the commission, provides a membership and appointment structure, outlines the commission's duties and powers, and sets a termination date for the commission. A variety of options are available for each of these organizational choices, and legislators can tailor the composition, organization, and working arrangements of a commission, based on the particular goals of Congress. As a result, the organizational structure and powers of individual commissions are often unique.

Commemorative commissions have been funded in two ways: through appropriations or through solicitation of nonfederal money. At times, commissions are authorized both for appropriations and to fundraise or accept donations. In addition, some commemorative commissions are not provided with explicit authorization to solicit funds or accept donations. Commissions without the statutory authority to solicit funds or accept donations are generally prohibited from engaging in those activities.

For general information on congressional commissions, see CRS Report R40076, *Congressional Commissions: Overview, Structure, and Legislative Considerations*, by Jacob R. Straus.

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Introduction

Commemorative commissions are entities established to oversee the commemoration of a person or event. These commissions typically coordinate celebrations, scholarly events, public gatherings, and other activities, often to coincide with a milestone anniversary. For example, the Christopher Columbus Quincentenary Jubilee Commission was created "to prepare a comprehensive program for commemorating the quincentennial of the voyages of discovery of Christopher Columbus, and to plan, encourage, coordinate, and conduct observances and activities commemorating the historic events associated with those voyages."[1]

This report examines commemorative commissions created by statute since the 96th Congress (1979-1980) and focuses on the content of typical legislative language used to create commemorative commissions and how commemorative commissions are funded.[2] This report does not address noncommemorative congressional commissions, nor does it address commemorative entities created by the President or statutory commissions tasked with designing and building monuments and memorials in Washington, DC.

Cataloging Commemorative Commissions

Bills creating commemorative commissions are introduced regularly in Congress. For example, since the 112th Congress (2011-2012), more than a dozen bills were introduced to establish commemorative commissions. Similar numbers of bills have been proposed in previous Congresses. Most of these bills, however, are not enacted.

To compile a list of commemorative commissions created since the 96th Congress, a database search was conducted using the Legislative Information System (LIS).[3] Each piece of legislation returned was examined to determine (1) if the legislation contained a commission, and (2) if the commission was commemorative in nature.

A total of 21 commemorative commissions were identified by this search. **Table 1** lists the name, public law number, and date of enactment for each of these commissions. Nine of the commissions were created to commemorate individuals and coincided with a milestone anniversary of their birth.[4] The other 12 commissions were related to the commemoration of historical events and coincided with a milestone anniversary of the event.[5]

[1] P.L. 98-375, 98 Stat. 1257, August 7, 1984.

[2] For information on the design of noncommemorative congressional commissions, see CRS Report R40076, *Congressional Commissions: Overview, Structure, and Legislative Considerations*, by Jacob R. Straus.

[3] The search was conducted in two iterations. First, a query was run using the subject term "Federal Advisory Bodies." Second, a query was run for various search terms, including "commission," "board," "task force," and "advisory committee."

[4] The individuals are Ronald Reagan, Abraham Lincoln, James Madison, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Dwight Eisenhower, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Frederick Douglass.

[5] The events are the voyage of Columbus, the founding of the colony at Jamestown, the writing of the Constitution, the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade, the Seneca Falls convention, the first successful airplane flight, World War I, the Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, the granting of women's suffrage, the arrival of African-Americans in the Americas and their contribution to American history, and the Virgin Islands becoming a United States unincorporated territory.

Table 1. Commemorative Congressional Commissions Created by Law

96th to 115th Congresses (1979-2018)

Commission	Public Law	Date Signed
400 Years of African-American History Commission	P.L. 115-102	January 8, 2018
Frederick Douglass Centennial Commission	P.L. 115-77	November 2, 2017
National Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission	P.L. 115-31[a]	May 5, 2017
Virgin Islands of the United States Centennial Commission	P.L. 114-224	September 29, 2016
John F. Kennedy Centennial Commission	P.L. 114-215	July 29, 2016
United States Semiquincentennial Commission	P.L. 114-196	July 22, 2016
World War I Centennial Commission	P.L. 112-272	January 15, 2013
Ronald Reagan Centennial Commission	P.L. 111-25	June 2, 2009
Commission on the Abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade	P.L. 110-183	February 5, 2008
Benjamin Franklin Tercentenary Commission	P.L. 107-202	July 24, 2002
Brown v. Board of Education 50th Anniversary Commission	P.L. 107-41	September 18, 2001
Jamestown 400th Commemoration Commission	P.L. 106-565	December 23, 2000
James Madison Commemorative Commission	P.L. 106-550	December 19, 2000
Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission[b]	P.L. 106-173	February 25, 2000
Centennial of Flight Commemoration Commission[c]	P.L. 105-389	November 13,1998
Women's Progress Commemoration Commission	P.L. 105-341	October 31, 1998
Thomas Jefferson Commemoration Commission[d]	P.L. 102-343	August 17, 1992
Dwight David Eisenhower Centennial Commission[e]	P.L. 99-624	November 7, 1986
Christopher Columbus Quincentenary Commission[f]	P.L. 98-375	August 7, 1984
Commission on Eleanor Roosevelt Centennial	P.L. 98-162	November 21, 1983
Commission on the Bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution[g]	P.L. 98-101	September 29, 1983

Source: CRS search of the Legislative Information System (LIS) database at http://www.congress.gov.

Notes:

a. The act establishing the National Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission was enacted by reference in P.L. 115-31, §431(a)(3), which enacted S. 847 (115th Congress), the Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission Act.

b. The act establishing the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission was amended by P.L. 108-59 (July 14, 2003), which extended the termination date for the commission.

c. The act establishing the Centennial of Flight Commemoration Commission was amended by P.L. 106-68 (October 6, 1999), which provided for additional duties for the commission and clarification of the hiring and funding practices of the commission.

d. The act establishing the Thomas Jefferson Commemorative Commission was amended by P.L. 103-191 (December 14, 1993), which extended the deadline for the final report of the commission.

e. The act establishing the Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial Commission was amended by P.L. 107-117 (January 10, 2002), which provided for additional funding through private donations.

f. The act establishing the Christopher Columbus Quincentenary Commission was amended by P.L. 100-94 (August 18, 1987), which provided for additional duties for the commission and extended the termination date.

g. The act establishing the Commission on the Bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution was amended twice. P.L. 99-549 (November 27, 1986) authorized further appropriations and extended the termination date of the commission. P.L. 102-181 (December 3, 1991) extended the termination date of the commission.

Commission Legislation Structure

Statutes establishing commemorative commissions generally include language that states the mandate of the commission, provides a membership and appointment structure, outlines the commission's duties and powers, and sets a termination date for the commission. A variety of options are available for each of these organizational choices, and legislators can tailor the composition, organization, and working arrangements of a commission, based on the particular goals of Congress. As a result, the organizational structure and powers of individual commissions are often unique.

Establishment and Mandate

A commission's establishment is generally prescribed in a brief introductory paragraph. The Dwight David Eisenhower Centennial Commission was established with a single sentence: "There is established the Dwight David Eisenhower Centennial Commission."[6]

A bill creating a commemorative commission will usually provide congressional "findings" identifying the conditions justifying the creation of the panel. The bill proposing the Centennial of Flight Commission includes six specific findings related to the historical ramifications of the development of flight technology and the importance of commemorating the event.[7] In other cases, legislation creating a commemorative commission may simply include a short "purpose" section describing the justification for the creation of the commission, in lieu of "findings."

Membership and Appointment

Commemorative commission statutes contain a variety of membership and appointment structures. Similar to general congressional advisory commission statutes, the legislation may require that commission membership contain specifically designated Members of Congress, typically Members in chamber or committee leadership positions. In other cases, selected congressional leaders appoint commission members, who may or may not be Members of Congress. A third common statutory scheme is to have selected congressional leaders recommend members, who may or may not be Members of Congress, for appointment to a commission. These leaders are often required to act either in parallel or jointly, and the recommendation may be made either to other congressional leaders, such as the Speaker of the House and President pro tempore of the Senate, or to the President.[8]

In some cases, statutory provisions may have the effect of limiting the degree of autonomy a Member has in appointing or making recommendations for commission membership. For example, statutory language may require the appointing official to select members who are

[6] P.L. 99-624, 100 Stat. 3497, November 7, 1986.

[7] P.L. 105-389, 110 Stat. 3486, November 13, 1998.

[8] For more information on appointments to advisory commissions, see CRS Report R40076, *Congressional Commissions: Overview, Structure, and Legislative Considerations*, by Jacob R. Straus.

specifically qualified by virtue of their education, knowledge, training, experience, expertise, distinguished service, or recognized eminence in a particular field or fields.[9] Limitations placed on the type of individuals who can be appointed to the commission can restrict available candidates and make finding suitable appointments more difficult. Limitations, however, also allow Congress to potentially retain control over the nomination process in instances when the President or another noncongressional official is the commission's appointing authority.

Most commemorative commissions do not compensate their members, except to reimburse members for expenses directly related to their service, such as travel costs.[10]

Commission Duties

The duties of commemorative commissions are numerous and varied. The acts establishing several of the commissions instructed them to study ideas for a commemoration and to submit a report to Congress with their findings. For example, P.L. 105-341 instructed the Women's Progress Commemorative Commission to produce a report that

> identifies sites of historical significance to the women's movement; and recommends actions, under the National Historic Preservation Act and other law, to rehabilitate and preserve the sites and provide to the public interpretive and educational materials and activities at the sites.[11]

In other instances, the enacted legislation tasked the commission with actually carrying out events in commemoration of the individual or event. For example, P.L. 99-624 directed the Dwight David Eisenhower Centennial Commission to

> encourage, plan, develop, and coordinate observances and activities commemorating the centennial of the birth of Dwight David Eisenhower; and submit recommendations to Congress relating to a joint meeting of both Houses of Congress to commemorate that centennial.[12]

Commission Powers

Most commemorative congressional commissions are authorized to hold public meetings to discuss commission matters, usually at the call of the chair or the majority of the commission. Some commissions are empowered to secure information from federal agencies. For example, the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission was authorized to

> secure directly from any department or agency of the United States information necessary to enable the Commission to carry out this Act. Upon the request of the Chair of the Commission, the head of that department or agency shall furnish that information to the Commission.[13]

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[9] For example, the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission statute (P.L. 106-173, 114 Stat. 14, February 25, 2000) required that citizens appointed to the commission be "qualified citizens" [Section 5(b)]. A qualified citizen was defined as "(1) a demonstrated dedication to educating others about the importance of historical figures and events; and (2) substantial knowledge and appreciation of Abraham Lincoln."

[10] For example, P.L. 111-25 establishing the Ronald Reagan Centennial Commission specifically prohibits commission members from receiving compensation [Section 4(f)] but allows travel expenses to be reimbursed [Section. 4(g)].

[11] P.L. 105-341, Section 4, 112 Stat. 3197, October 31, 1998; 16 U.S.C. §470a.

[12] P.L. 99-624, Section 3, 100 Stat. 3497, November 11, 1986.

[13] P.L. 106-173, Section 7(c), 114 Stat. 16, February 25, 2000; 36 U.S.C. note perc. §101.

In addition, Congress often grants commemorative commissions the ability to accept gifts and donations. For example, the Benjamin Franklin Tercentenary Commission was authorized to accept donations of "money, personal services, and real or personal property related to Benjamin Franklin or the occasion of the tercentenary of his birth."[14]

Commissions may also be given the following powers: the authority to contract with public agencies and private firms, and the authority to use the mails in the same manner as departments and agencies of the United States.[15]

Staff

Commemorative commissions are usually authorized to hire staff. Many of these commissions are specifically authorized to appoint a staff director and other personnel as necessary. The size of the staff is not generally specified, allowing the commission flexibility in judging its own staffing requirements. Typically, maximum pay rates will be specified, but the commission will be granted authority to set actual pay rates within those guidelines.[16]

Many commemorative commissions are also authorized to accept voluntary services:

> Nothwithstanding section 1342 of title 31, United States Code, the Commission may accept and use voluntary and uncompensated services as the Commission determines necessary.[17]

For some commemorative commissions, their statutes also specify that they are to work with the General Services Administration (or another agency) to offer administrative support or available space to the commission:

> Upon the request of the Commission, the Administrator of General Services shall make available nationwide to the Commission, at a normal rental rate for Federal agencies, such assistance and facilities as may be necessary for the Commission to carry out its duties under this Act.[18]

Relationships with Other Entities

In fulfilling their duties, most commemorative commissions have encouraged, worked closely with, and provided coordination for private groups, state and local governments, and other federal government entities taking part in the general commemoration of the person or event. Because of these cooperative efforts, federally created commissions are only a portion of any

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[14] P.L. 107-202, Section 7(g), 116 Stat. 742, July 24, 2002; 36 U.S.C. note perc. §101.

[15] For more information on powers granted to commission, see CRS Report R40076, *Congressional Commissions: Overview, Structure, and Legislative Considerations*, by Matthew E. Glassman and Jacob R. Straus.

[16] For example, the Thomas Jefferson Commemorative Commission was prohibited from paying its executive director more than "a rate not to exceed the maximum rate of basic pay payable for GS-15 of the General Schedule" and staff at a rate not to exceed "the maximum rate of basic pay payable for GS-13 of the General Schedule" P.L. 102-343, Section 7(a)-(b), 106 Stat. 918, October 17, 1992; 36 U.S.C. §149 note.

[17] P.L. 102-343, Section 8(c), 106 Stat. 919, October 17, 1992. 31 U.S.C. §1342 places limitations on voluntary services. It states "An officer or employee of the United States Government or of the District of Columbia government may not accept voluntary services for either government or employ personal services exceeding that authorized by law except for emergencies involving the safety of human life or the protection of property. This section does not apply to a corporation getting amounts to make loans (except paid in capital amounts) without legal liability of the United States Government. As used in this section, the term 'emergencies involving the safety of human life or the protection of property' does not include ongoing, regular functions of government the suspension of which would not imminently threaten the safety of human life or the protection of property."

[18] P.L. 111-25, Section 6(e), 123 Stat. 1769, June 2, 2009.

commemoration, and federal funds appropriated to a commemorative commission are only a portion of the total funding ultimately expended nationwide for commemorative activities and events.

For example, P.L. 107-41 directed the Brown v. Board of Education 50th Anniversary Commission to work in cooperation with

> the Brown Foundation for Educational Equity, Excellence, and Research in Topeka, Kansas, and such other public or private entities as the Commission considers appropriate, [to] encourage, plan, develop, and coordinate observances of the anniversary of the Brown decision.[19]

Similarly, P.L. 98-101 instructed the Commission on the Bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution to

> encourage private organizations, and State and local governments to organize and participate in bicentennial activities commemorating or examining the drafting, ratification, and history of the Constitution and the specific features of the document; coordinate, generally, activities throughout all of the States; and serve as a clearinghouse for the collection and dissemination of information about bicentennial events and plans.[20]

Termination

Commemorative commissions are usually statutorily mandated to terminate. Termination dates for most commissions are linked to either a fixed period of time after the establishment of the commission, the selection of members, or the date of submission of the commission's final report. Alternatively, some commissions are given fixed calendar termination dates.

Funding

Commemorative commissions have been funded in two ways: through appropriations or through solicitation of nonfederal money. At times, commissions are authorized both for appropriations and to fundraise or accept donations. In addition, some commemorative commissions are not provided with explicit authorization to solicit funds or accept donations. Commissions without the statutory authority to solicit funds or accept donations are generally prohibited from engaging in those activities.[21]

Federal Funding

Authorized Funding Levels

Commemorative commissions approved since the 96th Congress (1979-1980) have also varied widely in the amount of funding authorized by the acts establishing the commissions, as well as in the manner in which the funding was authorized. **Table 2** lists the authorizing language and the funding amounts authorized by each of the acts. Of the 21 commissions,

- five were authorized specific funding levels for each fiscal year;

[19] P.L. 107-41, Section 3, 115 Stat. 226, September 18, 2001; 36 U.S.C. note perc. 101.

[20] P.L. 98-101, Section 6(a), 97 Stat. 721, September 29, 1983.

[21] U.S. Government Accountability Office, *Principles of Federal Appropriations Law: Third Edition, Volume II*, GAO-06-382SP, February 2006, pp. 6-162, http://www.gao.gov/special.pubs/d06382sp.pdf.

- two were authorized a lump-sum appropriation, which remained available to be expended over specified fiscal years;
- four were not authorized specific levels of funding. Instead, the acts' language authorized "such sums as necessary" for an unspecified number of fiscal years;
- one authorized a specific level of funding for the first fiscal year, and such sums as necessary for an unspecified number of subsequent fiscal years;
- one was not specifically authorized any appropriation;
- seven were specifically barred from using federal funds; and
- one could only make expenditures from donated funds.

Table 2. Authorization for Appropriations for Commemorative Commissions

Commission Name	Funding Authorization Amount or Language
400 Years of African-American History Commission	All expenditures shall be made solely from donated funds
Frederick Douglass Centennial Commission	No federal funds are authorized or may be obligated for the commission
National Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission	Such sums as necessary for FY2017 to FY2021, available for life of the commission
Virgin Islands of the United States Centennial Commission	No federal funds may be obligated for the commission
John F. Kennedy Centennial Commission	No federal funds may be obligated for the commission
United States Semiquincentennial Commission	All expenditures shall be made solely from donated funds
World War I Centennial Commission	No federal funds may be obligated for the commission
Ronald Reagan Centennial Commission	No federal funds may be obligated for the commission
Commission on the Abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade	No statutory authorization of appropriations
Benjamin Franklin Tercentenary Commission	$500,000 for period of FY2002 through FY2007
Brown v. Board of Education 50th Anniversary Commission	$250,000 for FY2003 and FY2004
Jamestown 400th Commemoration Commission	Such sums as necessary
James Madison Commemorative Commission	$250,000 for FY2001
Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission	Such sums as necessary
Centennial of Flight Commemoration Commission	$250,000 for FY1999; $600,000 for FY2000; $750,000 for FY2001; $900,000 for FY2002; $900,000 for FY2003; and $600,000 for FY2004
Women's Progress Commemoration Commission	Such sums as necessary
Thomas Jefferson Commemoration Commission	$250,000 for FY1993 and $62,500 for FY1994
Dwight David Eisenhower Centennial Commission	$50,000 for FY1987
Christopher Columbus Quincentenary Commission	$220,000 per fiscal year for FY1984 through FY1992; and $20,000 for period from October 1 through November 15, 1992
Commission on Eleanor Roosevelt Centennial	No statutory authorization of appropriations

Commission Name	Funding Authorization Amount or Language
Commission on the Bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution	$300,000 for FY1984 and such sums as necessary for subsequent through FY1989

Source: Compilation of statutes authorizing the commissions.

Appropriation of Authorized Funds

Commissions created statutorily by Congress may be funded directly by specific appropriation or through general agency appropriations. For example, the Commission on the Bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution was specifically funded in both regular annual and supplemental appropriations acts.[22] Alternately, the Women's Progress Commemoration Commission was funded through general appropriations for the National Park Service (NPS) in the Department of the Interior (DOI).[23]

It is also possible for the funding structure to change during the life of a commission. From FY1999 through FY2001, the Centennial of Flight Commemorative Commission was funded through specific line-items in the Federal Aviation Administration operations appropriations. In subsequent years, the commission was funded through general agency appropriations.[24]

Several of the commemorative commissions received agency appropriations under the NPS through the DOI. These appropriations have not appeared as specific line-items in appropriations acts. Instead, they have been budgeted within agency appropriations under the headings "Operations of the National Park System" or "National Recreation and Preservation." For example, the Jamestown 400th Commemoration Commission was funded in FY2005 under the "National Recreation and Preservation" heading of the NPS appropriations, as part of a larger appropriation for related activities for the Jamestown 2007 celebration.[25]

Nonfederal Funding

Donations

In some cases, the operational expenses of the commission itself have been entirely funded through the appropriation of federal funds. However, legislation has authorized most

[22] For example, the Commission on the Bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution received a $330,000 appropriation in the 1985 Supplemental Appropriations Act (P.L. 99-88, August 15, 1985) and a $775,000 appropriation in the 1986 Commerce, Justice, State, and Judiciary Appropriations Act (P.L. 99-180, December 13, 1985).

[23] U.S. Department of the Interior; *Budget Justifications and Performance Information, Fiscal Year 2002 Budget Justifications*, http://data2.itc.nps.gov/budgetweb/downloads/fy%202002%20greenbook.pdf, p. NPS-240.

[24] From FY1999 until FY2001, Congress placed in the appropriations for FAA operations a specific amount for the commission. Beginning in FY2002, FAA did not specifically receive an appropriation for the commission. However, FAA allotted to the commission $900,000 in FY2002, $900,000 in FY2003, and $400,000 in FY2004 from its operations account. Department of Transportation Appropriations Acts, 2000, P.L. 106-69, October 9, 1999; 2001, P.L. 106-346, October 23, 2000; Omnibus Appropriations Act, 1999, P.L. 105-277, October 21, 1998; Centennial of Flight Commemorative Commission Final Report, Appendix 2, available at http://www.centennialofflight.gov/about/2004NtlPlan/app2.htm; Centennial of Flight Commemorative Commission Meeting Minutes, available at http://www.centennialofflight.gov/about/minutes.htm.

[25] U.S. Department of the Interior; *Budget Justifications and Performance Information, Fiscal Year 2007 Budget Justifications*, http://home.nps.gov/applications/budgetweb/downloads/fy_2007_greenbook.pdf, p. NR&P-63.

commemorative commissions to accept donations, including donations of money, property, personal services, memorabilia, or volunteer labor.

For example, P.L. 98-162 authorized the Commission on the Eleanor Roosevelt Centennial to "accept donations of money, supplies, and services to carry out its responsibilities."[26] Similarly, P.L. 106-550 authorized the James Madison Commemorative Commission to

> accept donations of money, personal services, and property, both real and personal, including books, manuscripts, miscellaneous printed matter, memorabilia, relics, and other material related to James Madison.[27]

In some cases, the authorizing language placed specific limitations on donations. For example, P.L. 98-375 authorized the Christopher Columbus Quincentenary Commission to

> accept donations of money, property, or personal services, except that the Commission may not accept donations (1) the aggregate value of which exceeds $25,000, in the case of an individual; or (2) the aggregate value of which exceeds $50,000 in the case of donations from a foreign government, a corporation, a partnership, or any other person.[28]

In at least one case, the authorizing language specified that only donated funds could be used to pay for commission expenses. For example, P.L. 115-102 specified that "all expenditures of the [400 Years of African-American History] Commission shall be solely made from donated funds."[29]

Donation Acceptance

Statutory language for the majority of commemorative commissions does not mention the words "fund raise." Instead, statutes commonly provide the commission with the authority to accept donations. For example, the Jamestown 400th Commemoration Commission was authorized to "accept donations and make dispersions of money, personal services, and real and personal property related to Jamestown and of the significance of Jamestown in the history of the United States."[30] Examples of other commissions with similar language include the following:

- Eisenhower Memorial Commission:

  > (b) Donations. – (1) The Commission may accept, use, and dispose of gifts or donations of money, property, or personal services.[31]

- Christopher Columbus Quincentenary Jubilee Commission:

  > The Commission may accept donations of money, property, or personal services.[32]

- Bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution:

  > (h)(1) The Commission is authorized to accept, use solicit, and dispose of donations of money, property, or personal services.

[26] P.L. 98-162, Section 4(d), 97 Stat. 1014, November 21, 1983.

[27] P.L. 106-550, Section 8, 114 Stat. 2749, December 12, 2000; 36 U.S.C. note perc. 101.

[28] P.L. 98-375, Section 7(a), 98 Stat. 1260, August 17, 1984.

[29] P.L. 115-102, §9.

[30] P.L. 106-565, Section 4(d)(1), 114 Stat. 2815, December 23, 2000.

[31] P.L. 99-624, Section 5(b)(1), 100 Stat. 3498, November 7, 1986.

[32] P.L. 98-375, Section 7, 98 Stat. 1260, August 7, 1984.

> (2) The Commission shall prescribe regulations under which the Commission may accept donations of money, property, or personal services.[33]

- Commission on the Eleanor Roosevelt Centennial:

  > (d) The Commission may accept donations of money, supplies, and services to carry out its Responsibilities.[34]

- Women's Progress Commemoration Commission:

  > (b) Donations.—The Commission may accept donations from non-Federal sources to defray the costs of the operations of the Commission.[35]

- Commission on the Abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade:

  > ... accept donations and gift items related to the transatlantic slave trade, the institution of slavery, and the significance of slavery to the history of the United States.[36]

- Brown v. Board of Education 50th Anniversary Commission:

  > (b) Gifts and Donations.—(1) Authority to accept.—The Commission may accept and use gifts or donations of money, property, or personal services.[37]

In addition, some commissions, such as the Centennial of Flight Commission, are provided with the authority to accept only nonmonetary donations. In that instance, the statutory language stated,

> Donations.—The Commission may accept donations of personal services and historic materials relating to the implementation of its responsibilities under the provisions of this Act.[38]

Fundraising

None of the 21 commemorative commission statutes discussed in this report contain language specifically authorizing fundraising.[39] Commissions, however, could be provided with authority to fundraise. To provide statutory fundraising authority, a commemorative commission could be given language similar to the authority given to commissions charged with creating monuments and memorials under the Commemorative Works Act, which requires the commission to raise a certain percentage of the total costs from private sources of a monument or memorial before construction can begin.[40] For example, the National Museum of African American History and Culture Plan for Action Presidential Commission statute contains the following language authorizing fundraising:

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[33] P.L. 98-101, Section 5(h), 97 Stat. 721, September 29, 1983.

[34] P.L. 98-162, Section 4(d), 97 Stat. 1014, November 21, 1983.

[35] P.L. 105-341, Section 7(b), 112 Stat. 3199, October 21, 1998; 16 U.S.C. 479a note.

[36] P.L. 110-183, Section 4(c)(1), 122 Stat. 609, February 5, 2008.

[37] P.L. 107-41, Section 5(b), 115 Stat. 228, September 18, 2001.

[38] P.L. 105-389, Section 8(a), 112 Stat. 3490, November 13, 1998.

[39] The 400 Years of African-American History Commission, however, has statutory language that requires all its expenditures to be paid from donated funds (P.L. 115-102, §9).

[40] 40 U.S.C. §§8901-8909. In addition most monument and memorial commissions are not authorized appropriations and are prohibited from using Federal funds for the design or building of the monument or memorial.

> Fundraising Plan.—The Commission shall develop a fundraising plan for supporting the creation and maintenance of the Museum through contributions by the American people, and a separate plan on fundraising by the African American community.[41]

Estimating Costs

Congressional commission costs vary widely. Overall expenses for any individual commission are dependent on a variety of factors, the most important of which are the number of paid staff and duration of the commission. Many commissions have few or no full-time staff; others employ large numbers. Additionally, some commissions provide compensation to members; others only reimburse members for travel expenses. Many commissions finish their work and terminate within a year of creation; in other cases, work may not be completed for several years.

Secondary factors that can affect commission costs include the number of commissioners, how often the commission meets or holds hearings, and the number and size of publications the commission produces. Although congressional commissions are primarily funded through congressional appropriations, many commissions are statutorily authorized to accept donations of money and volunteer labor, which may offset costs.

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This report was initially coauthored with Matthew E. Glassman, former analyst on the Congress. The listed author is available to answer questions from congressional clients about its content.

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[41] P.L. 107-106, Section 3(b), 115 Stat. 1010, December 28, 2001.