
OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 6040 (as amended by House "A")*

AN ACT REQUIRING THE STATE COMMISSION ON CAPITOL PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION TO DEVELOP A PROCESS FOR ADDING STATUES TO THE STATE CAPITOL AND ESTABLISHING THE STATE HISTORICAL COMMISSION.

SUMMARY

This bill creates a 12-member State Historical Commission to examine and make recommendations to the legislative, executive, and judicial branches on questions of memorialization and commemoration related to Connecticut and U.S. history. It also requires the commission to develop a process for identifying and commissioning additional statues for the State Capitol building's exterior.

Correspondingly, the bill requires the State Capitol Preservation and Restoration Commission to implement the State Historical Commission's process. It also allows the Legislative Management Committee to commission additional statues through this process, using capital funds and following state bidding laws.

The bill also requires the State Historical Commission, by February 1, 2026, to (1) develop a plan to install placards or other signs around the State Capitol building's exterior to give the public a written historical explanation of the various statues and other markers on the building exterior and (2) submit the plan to the State Capitol Preservation and Restoration Commission and Legislative Management Committee. The Preservation and Restoration Commission must make recommendations to the committee on implementing the plan.

*House Amendment "A" replaces the underlying bill (File 550) and (1) requires the State Historical Commission to develop the plan to commission additional statues for the State Capitol and the State Capitol Preservation and Restoration Commission to implement it; (2) requires the historical commission, instead of the preservation and restoration

commission, to develop the placard plan; and (3) modifies the State Historical Commission's membership.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

STATE HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Membership

The bill creates the commission as an independent body within the legislative branch for administrative purposes only. Its membership consists of the following state officials: the chief court administrator or her designee, state historian, state librarian, and state preservation officer. It also includes eight appointed members, one each representing the organizations listed in the table below.

Table: State Historical Commission Appointed Members

<i>Appointing Authority</i>	<i>Organization Appointee Must Represent</i>
House speaker	CT Humanities
House majority leader	CT Library Association
Senate president pro tempore	CT Democracy Center
Senate majority leader	Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation
House minority leader	CT Museum of Culture and History
Senate minority leader	Mohegan Tribe of Indians of CT
Governor (two appointments)	(1) Freeman Center for History and Community, Inc. and (2) undesignated

Appointing authorities must make their initial appointments by September 1, 2025, and fill any vacancy. Vacancies occurring during a term must be filled for the rest of the unexpired term. Appointed members (excluding gubernatorial appointees) may be legislators.

Members serve three-year terms starting on their appointment date and continue to serve until their successors are appointed. They serve without compensation but may be reimbursed for necessary expenses, within available funds.

Leadership and Meetings

Under the bill, the House speaker and Senate president pro tempore must select the chairperson from among the commission members. The

chairperson must schedule and hold the first meeting by September 15, 2025. A majority of commission members constitutes a quorum to conduct business.

The Government Administration and Elections (GAE) Committee's administrative staff serve in this capacity for the commission.

Powers and Duties

The bill authorizes the commission to:

1. issue reports and recommendations to all three branches of government on historical questions of memorialization and commemoration related to Connecticut and U.S. history, on its own initiative or upon request of any state agency, department, board, or commission;
2. develop a process for identifying and commissioning additional statues for the State Capitol building's exterior;
3. obtain available assistance and data from these government entities needed to carry out the commission's purposes;
4. accept gifts, donations, or bequests to perform its duties; and
5. perform other appropriate and necessary acts to carry out its duties.

Reports

By January 1, 2026, the commission must develop the process for identifying and commissioning additional statues and submit a report detailing the process to the State Capitol Preservation and Restoration Commission. The State Historical Commission must update the process when necessary and submit these revisions to the State Capitol Preservation and Restoration Commission.

The bill also requires the State Historical Commission, starting by February 1, 2026, to report annually to the governor and the GAE Committee.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Government Administration and Elections Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 13 Nay 6 (03/19/2025)