



2006-04

**EXECUTIVE ORDER CREATING THE GOVERNOR'S  
ILLINOIS ABRAHAM LINCOLN BICENTENNIAL COMMISSION**

WHEREAS, Abraham Lincoln lived in Illinois from 1830 to 1861, passing during that time from a young adult to maturity as President of the United States during a critical point in the nation's history;

WHEREAS, he settled in Macon County in 1830 with his father's family and in 1831 set out on his own at New Salem in Menard County on a personal journey that took him from an unskilled laborer, store clerk, postmaster, surveyor, and self-taught lawyer to a state legislator and the nation's sixteenth president;

WHEREAS, Lincoln was inspired to enter the national political scene when the 1854 repeal of the Missouri Compromise threatened to expand slavery;

WHEREAS, he rose to national prominence in 1858 during the Lincoln-Douglas Debates where he appealed to the common sense and humanity of the people in charting a course for the country's future that embraced freedom for all its citizens;

WHEREAS, Abraham Lincoln lived, practiced law, married, and raised a family in Springfield from 1837 to his departure as president-elect to Washington, D. C., on February 11, 1861;

WHEREAS, determining that union could not be maintained by peaceful means, Abraham Lincoln preserved the United States of America through the crucible of civil war and encouraged re-union "with malice toward none and charity for all;"

WHEREAS, the martyred president lies at rest at Oak Ridge Cemetery in Springfield, and his exemplary life is commemorated at numerous private and public historic sites in Illinois;

WHEREAS, there is a national effort underway to commemorate the bicentennial anniversary of the 1809 birth of Abraham Lincoln, as historians have consistently regarded him as one of the nation's most significant presidents;

WHEREAS, many Illinois historical, tourist, and civic groups are beginning preparations for events and activities to commemorate the bicentennial of Lincoln's birth;

WHEREAS, it is desirable for the State of Illinois to create a commission to plan and carry out its own bicentennial tributes to Abraham Lincoln, and to coordinate those activities with the federal government's Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission and other interested parties.

THEREFORE, I, Rod R. Blagojevich, hereby order the following:

**I. ESTABLISHMENT**

- A. There shall be established the Illinois Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission (the "Commission").
- B. The commission shall be provided assistance and support services by the Office of the Governor, the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, the Illinois Bureau of Tourism, and other planning agencies of state government in organizing the bicentennial celebration.

**II. MEMBERSHIP**

- A. The Commission shall include the following individuals or their respective designees: Governor, President of the Senate, Senate Minority Leader, Speaker of the House, House Minority Leader, Attorney General, Lieutenant Governor, Treasurer, Comptroller, Secretary of State, Illinois Congressional Delegation, Mayor of Chicago, and Mayor of Springfield.
- B. Membership shall also include representatives from the following organizations: Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum Foundation, Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, and the Illinois Bureau of Tourism.
- C. The Governor may also appoint up to 30 members from the areas of Academia, Business, the Arts, Community Development, Historic Preservation, the Civil Rights Community, as well as members of the general public.
- D. Members shall serve without compensation, but may be reimbursed for expenses.

### III. PURPOSE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The purpose responsibilities of the Commission shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- A. Lead Illinois' planning efforts to commemorate the significance of Abraham Lincoln to our state and national history.
- B. Research and make prioritized recommendations outlining the most effective and beneficial means for the State of Illinois to commemorate the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Celebration.
- C. Identify and pursue resources necessary to effectively communicate the bicentennial.
- D. Implement recommendations by working with the Governor's Office, appropriate state and local government agencies, members of the Illinois General Assembly, and organizations that are dedicated to commemorating the life of Abraham Lincoln.
- E. Coordinate communications with the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Congressional Caucus to ensure Illinois will be a significant state for events recognizing the contributions of Abraham Lincoln.
- F. Coordinate all scheduling of Illinois Abraham Lincoln bicentennial activities.
- G. The commission shall submit an annual report to the Governor and the General Assembly, including a list of recommended improvements to Abraham Lincoln commemorative locations.

### IV. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Executive Order Number 4, (2006) shall be effective upon filing with the Secretary of State.

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Rod R. Blagojevich, Governor

Issued by Governor: February 14, 2006  
Filed with Secretary of State: February 14, 2006