



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

Gina M. Raimondo
Governor

EXECUTIVE ORDER

17-04

April 6, 2017

**ESTABLISHING THE RHODE ISLAND WORLD WAR I
CENTENNIAL COMMISSION**

WHEREAS, the people of the State of Rhode Island honor the more than 4,000,000 Americans who served during World War I, and remember the more than 110,000 who made the supreme sacrifice with their lives; and

WHEREAS, April 6, 1917, marks the entrance of the United States of America into World War I; and

WHEREAS, over 53,000 Rhode Islanders enlisted and 612 Rhode Islanders lost their lives in World War I; and

WHEREAS, the 103rd Field Artillery Regiment represented the people of Rhode Island during the war, distinguishing itself in the Second Battle of the Mame, the Third Battle of the Aisne, the Battle of Saint-Mihiel, and the Meuse-Argonne Offensive, amongst others; and

WHEREAS, Rhode Island raised 18 companies of the State Guard to serve during the war; and

WHEREAS, April marks the month the *USS Rhode Island* (BB-17) was commissioned to anti-submarine patrols off the East Coast of the United States, and following the war was assigned to repatriate soldiers back to the United States; and

WHEREAS, the citizens of Rhode Island worked collaboratively to support those overseas fighting in the war by creating war gardens to supply food, volunteering with the American Red Cross, and implementing fundraising efforts, among other activities; and

WHEREAS, Brown & Sharpe Manufacturing Company based in Providence was influential in creating the tools and machines needed to support the war effort; and

WHEREAS, President Barack H. Obama officially created the National World War I Centennial Commission when he signed the World War Centennial Commission Act (Public Law 112-272) on January 16, 2013; and

WHEREAS, the National World War I Centennial Commission's mission is to work with state and local governments throughout the United States to plan, develop, and execute programs, projects and activities to commemorate the centennial of World War I; and

WHEREAS, the National World War I Centennial Commission actively encourages individual state governments to establish local World War I centennial commissions for the purpose of planning and executing commemorative activities and events within their states; and

WHEREAS, the centennial of World War I offers an opportunity for people in the State of Rhode Island to learn about the history of America's participation in World War I, the involvement of Rhode Islanders in that war, and the war's effects on the 20th century; and

WHEREAS, the Rhode Island World War I Centennial Commission would serve the purpose of commemorating and honoring the participation of Rhode Island and its citizens in the overall war effort.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GINA M. RAIMONDO, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, do hereby order as follows:

1. The Rhode Island World War I Centennial Commission is hereby created.
2. The Governor shall appoint the chairperson of the Commission and shall serve as its Honorary Chair. Members shall be appointed by the Governor and shall serve from April 6, 2017, to November 11, 2018, when the Commission's work shall conclude. Members shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor and will not receive any monetary compensation for their service on the Commission.

3. The members shall include the following:

- A representative of the Lieutenant Governor's Office;
- A representative of the Secretary of State's Office;
- A representative of the President of the Senate;
- A representative of the Speaker of the House of Representatives;
- The Adjutant General of the State of Rhode Island or a representative;
- The Director of the Rhode Island Office of Veterans Affairs or a representative;
- A representative of the American Legion Department of Rhode Island;
- A representative of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Department of Rhode Island;
- A representative of the Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission;
- A representative of the Rhode Island Historical Society;
- A representative of the Rhode Island Office of Library and Information Services;
- A representative of the Rhode Island Department of Education;
- A representative of the Rhode Island Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner;
- A representative of the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management;
- A representative of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns;
- A representative of the U.S. Naval War College; and
- Other such individuals or representatives whom the Governor may from time to time deem necessary and useful for this purpose.

4. The Commission shall:

- a. Work with the National World War I Centennial Commission to plan and oversee the execution of the State of Rhode Island's World War I centennial commemorative activities and events;
- b. Coordinate with the Rhode Island Office of Veteran Affairs to solicit grant and charitable funds or in-kind contributions from public and private individuals and organizations to fund projects and programs;
- c. Advise state and local leaders on the suitability and practicality of hosting qualified World War I events commemorating Rhode Island's involvement in the war;

- d. Create an educational program to raise awareness of Rhode Island's role throughout World War I; and
- e. Deliver to the Governor and the General Assembly a report detailing the Commission's activities in attracting events and accounting for the year's events.

This Executive Order shall take effect immediately.

So Ordered:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gina Raimondo", written over a horizontal line.

Gina M. Raimondo
Governor

Dated: April 6, 2017