



TWO LIGHTS FOR TOMORROW

APRIL 18-19, 2025 • A CALL TO ACTION!

Connecting Then To Now

The events that sparked the War for Independence outside Boston in April of 1775 are immortalized in Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's famous poem, "Paul Revere's Ride" with the famous line about ***One if by land, Two if by sea.***

Written only 90 years after those events (before the last veteran of that conflict had passed on), his words perhaps rang true, "On the 18th of April in '75, hardly a man is now alive that remembers that famous day and year...."

Today, 250 years later, we gather together as state commissions to plan ways to ensure that not only are those events remembered, but more importantly to ensure that not just the "what" of "what happened" is remembered but the "why". We are called not to remember history just for history's sake, but to make it relevant, meaningful, and engaging for the public today.

The famous signal from the North Church's steeple that night in '75, ***One if by land, Two if by sea,*** was a signal meant to shine across the water to others on the opposite shore so that they could carry the message forward - not just as a back-up for Paul Revere, but to make sure that the message got spread as far and as wide as possible. And just like then, we have that same calling today -

to spread a message calling on everyone in the country to join together in support of one another, to serve each other, our neighbors, and our communities.

How to Participate

On April 18, 2025, we're calling for two lights to be displayed in every statehouse across the country as a reminder that that message of light shining out in the darkness is not just something that mattered back then - it's something that matters today and for tomorrow.

Some commissions are planning a public program for the lighting. This is an opportunity to not only raise public awareness of the upcoming semiquincentennial, but to set the message we want the public to understand about how we'll mark the commemorations: It's not about history just for history's sake; it's about reminding people what it was all for in the first place and how we're called to continue creating that "more perfect union" each and every day, together.

Two Lights For Tomorrow is an opportunity to engage our key commission stakeholders by utilizing the program to not only engage the public with a ceremony, performance, or brief remarks, but to provide media coverage illustrating their engagement with the commissions. This is especially useful for



commissions that are part of government agencies - this is a good chance to provide legislators and administrators with an opportunity to encourage bridging political divides and showing the people and the media that we can indeed come together for a common cause.

Some states will follow **Two Lights For Tomorrow** with a day of service on April 19th, with projects ranging from park and cemetery clean-ups, Habitat for Humanity builds, food drives, and card writing to residents of care facilities.

A Toolkit Is Coming

A toolkit is being developed with assets such as a common logo, suggestions for media outreach / press releases, proclamation languages, public program ideas, and more.

A national media engagement plan is also coming, with an anticipated initial outreach of January 2025.

Who is Participating?

Virginia, **Alabama**, Colorado, Texas, Ohio, Michigan, Delaware, Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota, Massachusetts, Arizona, Indiana, South Carolina, Wisconsin, and North Carolina have all indicated support and a desire to participate.

A webpage will host an interactive map where participating entities can submit the location of their two lights, which will then populate the map so that everyone can see the lights spreading across the country.

It Is Meant to be Accessible & Scalable

- This event can be large or small - from two candles in a window to two spotlights casting two pillars of light into the air. Whatever works for you.
- Everyone can participate. It doesn't just have to be in each state's capitol. It can and should be as many locations as possible –community centers, municipal and county administrative buildings, and even personal home windows.
 - o *Some governor's offices are considering issuing executive orders to encourage government department buildings, municipalities, and every citizens to participate.*
- There isn't a specific kind of light, duration of display, or location, because it should be approachable and achievable for everyone (especially taking into account that state-level commission planners would need to work within their own state capitol's approval processes for displays – factoring in the restrictions and accommodations that each capitol has - so each commission is empowered to determine the best way to propose participation in order to achieve the approvals needed within their own systems).

In the End, Why Should as Many States Participate as Possible?

What began as a localized effort in Boston meant to ensure that the message calling on support for one another would continue, and not be dependent on just a select few sending the message forward, was a year later pledged in ink by all the fledgling states in the closing line of our Declaration that ***"we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor."***

It is our duty, responsibility, and honor to ensure that the light which burned so brightly 250 years ago not only still shines just as brightly today – but also stays lit for a better tomorrow.