

STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

At Charleston

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 12-25

By the Governor

WHEREAS, the United States Congress has authorized the President “to invite all the States to provide and furnish statues, in marble or bronze, not exceeding two in number for each State, of deceased persons who have been citizens thereof, and illustrious for their historic renown or for distinguished civic or military services, such as each State may deem to be worthy of this national commemoration,” 2 U.S.C. § 2131; and

WHEREAS, since 1901, West Virginia has been represented in the National Statuary Hall Collection at the United States Capitol by the statute of John Kenna; and

WHEREAS, in 2000, Congress allowed states, for the first time, the option to replace statues in the National Statuary Hall under guidelines produced by the Joint Committee on the Library in conjunction with the Architect of the Capitol; and

WHEREAS, those guidelines set out the steps required for replacing statutes in the National Statutory Hall including that the State Legislature enact a resolution that identifies the statute to be replaced, names the individual to be newly commemorated, cites his or her qualifications, selects a committee or commission to represent the State in selecting a sculptor, and directs the method of obtaining the necessary funds to carry the resolution into effect; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to those guidelines, the West Virginia Legislature passed a concurrent resolution on October 10, 2024, 86th Leg. 2nd Ex. Sess., SCR 202 (Oct. 10, 2024), recognizing the importance of honoring individuals whose contributions reflect the values and achievements of our great state; and

WHEREAS, the resolution acknowledged that Hershel “Woody” Williams, a native West Virginian, was a distinguished Marine Corps veteran who received the Congressional Medal of Honor on October 5, 1945, from President Harry S. Truman for his exemplary actions at the Battle

of Iwo Jima during World War II and whose extraordinary service exemplifies the values of courage, sacrifice, and dedication; and

WHEREAS, the resolution further recognized that in addition to his extraordinary military service, Hershel “Woody” Williams established the Gold Star Families Memorial Monument program, a nationwide initiative that indelibly honors the families of fallen service members and preserves their legacies; and

WHEREAS, Hershel “Woody” Williams is the namesake of the Woody Williams Foundation, an initiative that offers scholarships to Gold Star children and sponsors outreach and educational programs to communities and citizens about Gold Star families and the sacrifices they have endured; and

WHEREAS, the life and achievements of Hershel “Woody” Williams, including his extraordinary courage in battle and founding of the Gold Star Families Program, serve as an inspiration to all West Virginians and Americans, reflecting the spirit of our state and the ideals that the National Statuary Hall Collection seeks to represent; and

WHEREAS, the resolution directed the replacement of the statue of John Kenna in the National Statuary Hall at the United States Capitol with a statue of Hershel “Woody” Williams, with the statue of John Kenna to be displayed at the State Culture Center upon removal; and it identified persons to be included in a commission, appointed by the Governor, to select a sculptor for the replacement statue, and it directed the method of obtaining the necessary funds to carry the resolution into effect.

NOW, THEREFORE I, PATRICK MORRISEY, by virtue of the authority vested in me as the Governor of the State of West Virginia, do hereby **DECLARE and ORDER**:

1. The Hershel “Woody” Williams Statute Commission (the “Commission”) is hereby constituted and charged with selecting the sculptor and providing for the design and creation of a replacement statue of Hershel “Woody” Williams—in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the Architect of the Capitol—to represent West Virginia in the National Statuary Hall Collection at the United States Capitol; and
2. The Commission shall provide for the transfer of the statue of John Kenna from the National Statuary Hall to the State Culture Center for display; and

3. The Commission shall consist of the following individuals:

- a. The Secretary of the Department of Tourism, who will serve as Chair of the Commission;
- b. The Governor, or his or her designee;
- c. The Secretary of Veteran's Assistance, or his or her designee;
- d. The President of the Senate, or his or her designee;
- e. The Speaker of the House of Delegates, or his or her designee;
- f. The Minority Leader of the Senate, or his or her designee;
- g. The Minority Leader of the House of Delegates, or his or her designee;
- h. The Deputy Secretary of Tourism; or his or her designee;
- i. The Director of the Purchasing Division, or his or her designee; and
- j. Up to twelve (12) members of the public to be appointed by the Governor.

4. The Commission shall meet as often as required to fulfill its objectives; and funding for the design and creation of the replacement statue shall be provided from the Governor's Contingency Fund.

5. This Executive Order shall terminate and the Commission shall be of no effect upon placement of the statue of Hershel "Woody" Williams in the National Statuary Hall and the transfer of the statue of John Kenna to the State Culture Center.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of West Virginia to be affixed.

DONE at the Capitol in the City of Charleston, State of West Virginia, this Eleventh Day of November, in the Year of our Lord, Two Thousand Twenty-Five in the One Hundred Sixty-Third Year of the State.



GOVERNOR



SECRETARY OF STATE



By the Governor