Interim Activity of the Commission for Historical Statues in the U.S. Capitol

Date of Report: December 1, 2025

Author: Department of Historic Resources

Enabling Authority: HB 1406, Chapter 1099 Virginia Acts of Assembly

Executive Summary: Pursuant to the powers and duties authorized under Chapter 1099 of the 2020 Virginia Acts of Assembly, The Virginia General Assembly created the Commission for Historical Statues in the United States Capitol and tasked it with studying the removal and replacement of the Robert E. Lee statue in the Capitol's National Statuary Hall Collection, where each state is entitled to have two statues. Virginia's other statue is of George Washington.

Commission Members: The commission consists of eight members. Governor Ralph Northam appointed Dr. Edward Ayres and Dr. Colita Fairfax. The Virginia Senate appointed Senator Louise Lucas, and the House of Delegates appointed Del. Jeion Ward. Three citizen members were elected at the Commission's first meeting: Dr. Fred Motley of Danville, Chief Anne Richardson of the Rappahannock Tribe and a resident of Indian Neck, and Margaret "Margi" Vanderhye of McLean. Julie Langan, Director of the Department of Historic Resources, serves as an *ex-officio* member.

Summary of Commission Meetings: The Commission has held a total of twelve meetings since its inception, all of which were publicly noticed as required by the *Code of Virginia § 2.2-3707.* Between July 2020 and July 2022, seven meetings were held virtually due to the State of Emergency declared by Governor Northam as authorized by and in compliance with § 4-0.01 of the 2020 Appropriations Act (HB 30, Chapter 1289) that was previously in effect. All meetings were recorded, and minutes were prepared and posted to the Commission's webpage. Since the last report dated December 1, 2024, an person meeting was held on June 18, 2025.

Budget: The project remains within the budget established by the Commission.

Milestones:

May 1, 2025: Langan visited foundry on behalf of Commission to inspect sculpture.

May 16, 2025: Langan visited Weitzman Studios on behalf of Commission to inspect statue and pedestal.

June 18, 2025: Julie Langan, on behalf of the Commission, submitted photos of the finished statue to the Architect of the Capitol and the Joint Committee on the Library for approval.

August 1, 205: Julie Langan was informed, via emailed letter, that the Office of the Architect of the Capitol and the Joint Committee on the Library had approved the finished statue and that the sculptor had received final approval.

November 6, 2025: House Speaker Mike Johnson scheduled unveiling ceremony for December 16, 2025.

Next Steps:

December 12, 2025: Sculpture will be installed in Emancipation Hall, United States Capitol.

December 16, 2025: Sculpture will be unveiled in Emancipation Hall, United States Capitol.

December 19, 2025: Sculpture to be moved to its permanent location in the Crypt, United States Capitol.