§ 19.07 People's history project. 1. The legislature hereby finds and declares that the history of New York state is replete with persons, sites, and events of both local and statewide importance that have heretofore been overlooked by mainstream, established history. The state's historical sites and history as it is taught in school and popularly recorded fail to take into consideration the multitude of peoples who have built this state, a state that has been significantly impacted by immigrant and ethnic populations of this country and home to the majority of social and economic movements of the last four hundred years. It is time to recognize those from every background who have contributed to the history of this state, and give new cause for pride and create new role models for all people. Recognizing such historical sites, events and persons will also contribute to tourism, especially special niche tourism, and consequently contribute to the economic development of the state, especially in areas that are underdeveloped economically and disadvantaged.

2. The commissioner shall establish within the office a people's history committee. The members of the committee shall be appointed by the commissioner and shall be representative of academic and professional historians, members of local historical societies and other such groups. Such members of the committee shall reflect the diversity of the residents of this state with regard to race, ethnicity, gender, language, and geographic residence. The members of the committee shall serve without compensation, but shall be allowed their actual and necessary expenses.

3. The commissioner shall establish a process whereby the people of the state may nominate persons, sites, and events of historical significance each year for inclusion in the people's history project who may be of local, regional, statewide or national significance. The committee, in consultation with local historians, historical societies, and other authorities, where appropriate, shall evaluate the merits of such nominees, and may select up to ten persons, sites or events per year for inclusion in the people's history project. In its evaluation of the merits of nominees, such commission shall consider, including but not limited to, the following factors: the historical impact of such

person, site or event, how such impact changed history, and the effect that such person, site or event had on the state and whether such person, site, or event that has been overlooked.

4. For nominees approved by the committee, suitable commemorative markers of selected sites may be erected at the appropriate location or locations as determined by the commissioner. The office shall maintain a website listing the persons, sites, and events selected by the committee, a description thereof, a map showing the locations thereof if applicable, and any other relevant information.