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CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER RECEIVES PERMANENT CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY

WASHINGTON -- Stephen T. Ayers, AIA, Acting Architect of the Capitol, announced that the permanent Certificate of Occupancy for the Capitol Visitor Center was issued today.

"Receipt of the Certificate of Occupancy signals that the facility is safe for all those who work there and for the millions of people we expect to come through its doors beginning December 2. I want to congratulate the Project Team and the entire AOC organization for achieving this remarkable accomplishment. It is the ultimate example of amazing teamwork," said Ayers.

The permanent Certificate of Occupancy was issued by the Agency's Fire Marshal signifying the fire and life-safety systems are ready and the Visitor Center's Operations Team may begin its test and adjust period.

"It's critical that we be able to conduct test and adjust exercises in the facility in advance of the Visitor Center's official opening on December 2," said Terrie Rouse, Chief Executive Officer for Visitor Services. "The Certificate of Occupancy gives our team the green light to begin this process, and will greatly enhance our ability to ensure that each visitor's experience to the U.S. Capitol will be comfortable, educational, and inspiring."

Building access will continue to be controlled as opening preparations continue, and occupant moves will continue to be coordinated by the Superintendent of the Capitol Building.

Congressional leaders selected December 2, 2008, as the public opening date for the Visitor Center, which is also the 145th anniversary of the date on which the Statue of Freedom was placed atop the Capitol Dome.

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