



U.S. CAPITOL
Visitor Center

CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS ANNOUNCE OPENING DATE FOR CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER



Capitol Visitor Center Entrance

On Thursday, July 10, the four top Congressional leaders, Speaker of the House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, and House Republican Leader John Boehner, announced that the official public opening date for the U.S. Capitol Visitor Center will be December 2, 2008. This is a significant date in the history of the U.S. Capitol as it was on December 2, 1863, that the Statue of Freedom was placed atop the Capitol Building to signify the completion of construction of the new dome.

The Visitor Center will be a place of civic engagement that will enhance the visitor's experience at the Capitol Building with an inspiring 13-minute orientation film and an informative exhibit that tells the story of representative democracy in the United States along with the building of the Capitol. Visitors will have the opportunity to tour the Capitol and see the Legislative Branch in action, and they will have the chance to make advance reservations for their tour times.

As the largest expansion of the U.S. Capitol, the Visitor Center will provide numerous amenities to visitors. It features two large orientation movie theatres and an Exhibition Hall that will include rarely-seen documents and artifacts from the National Archives and the Library of Congress that relate specifically to the duties and responsibilities of Congress.

Member offices will be kept informed regarding details of the December 2, 2008, opening activities, how to book tours through the new "Advance Reservation System," the hours of operation, orientation tours for Members and Congressional staff, room reservation procedures, upcoming educational programming, and the Visitor Center itself. In the meantime, if you have questions, please feel free to call Sharon Gang, Communications Manager for the Capitol Visitor Center, at (202) 225-9443.