

United States Capitol Visitors Center

July 24, 2017

The new United States Capitol Visitor Center is an extraordinary space that provides hospitality, amenities, meeting spaces and learning opportunities. It is 580,000 square feet on three levels and includes 170,000 square feet of new building space for the House and Senate. With the visitor experience in mind, architectural and programming design features allow staff to efficiently process over 1 million visitors per year.

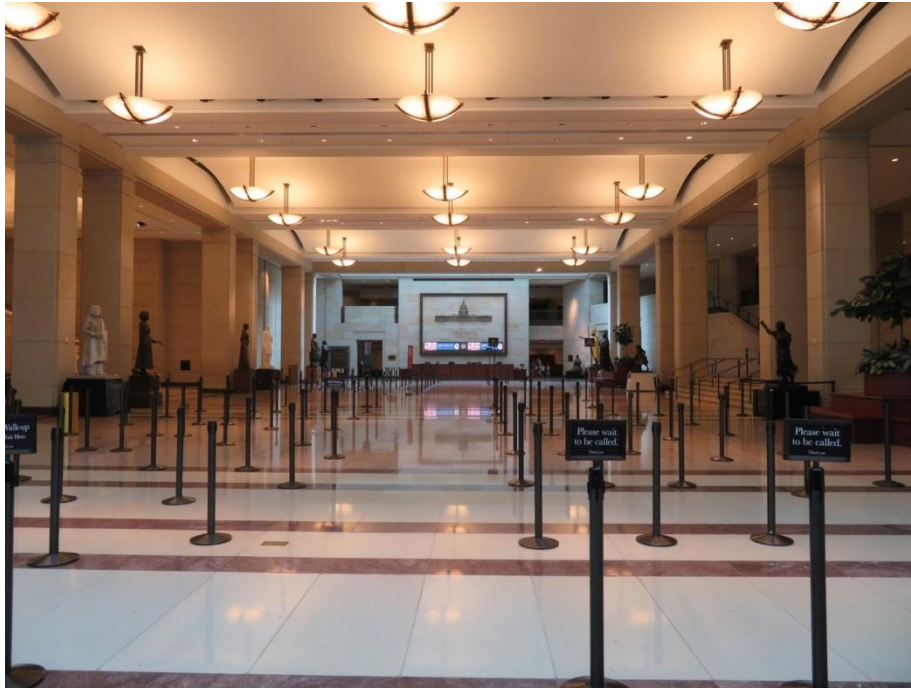
According to the Visitor Center's website:

“The mission of the U.S. Capitol Visitor Center team is ‘Working together for Congress to inform, involve and inspire every visitor to the United States Capitol.’ This statement conveys our goal to provide a welcoming and educational environment for visitors to learn about the unique characteristics of the House, the Senate and the legislative process as well as the history and development of the architecture and art of the U.S. Capitol. The Visitor Center also provides amenities for visitor comfort, safety and security resulting in a seamless, positive visitor experience at the U.S. Capitol.

Through national and international partnerships, outreach to schools across the country, and a vibrant Web presence, the U.S. Capitol Visitor Center experience begins for visitors long before they set foot in the Capitol. Educational materials stimulate discussions of the privileges and responsibilities of citizenship in a representative democracy and celebrate the roles that the House and the Senate play in our daily lives.”



Effective procedures that are easy for visitors to follow are presented in large format. Brochures for alternative self-guided tours are offered to engage visitors while waiting for their tours.

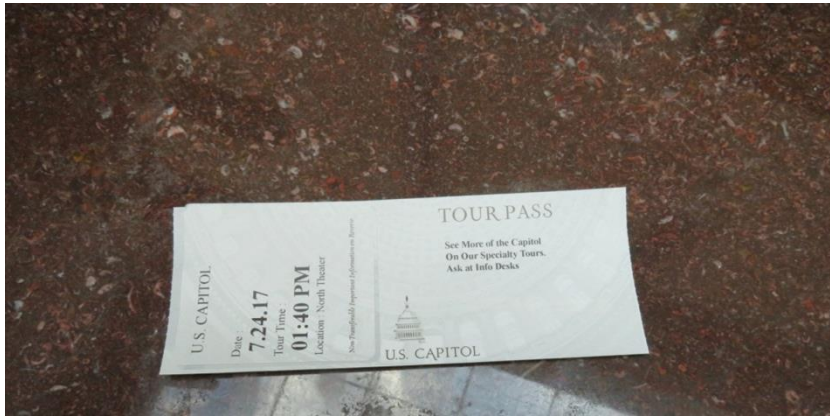


Efficient and strict procedures for entering the building, tours and visitor exploration assist visitor center staff in processing over 1 million people per year.



A rotating banner provides information on all of the opportunities and amenities above the check-in station.





Tour passes are allotted to each individual guest and a lapel sticker is provided with specific tour group information.



Wayfinding signage is consistent and clear.



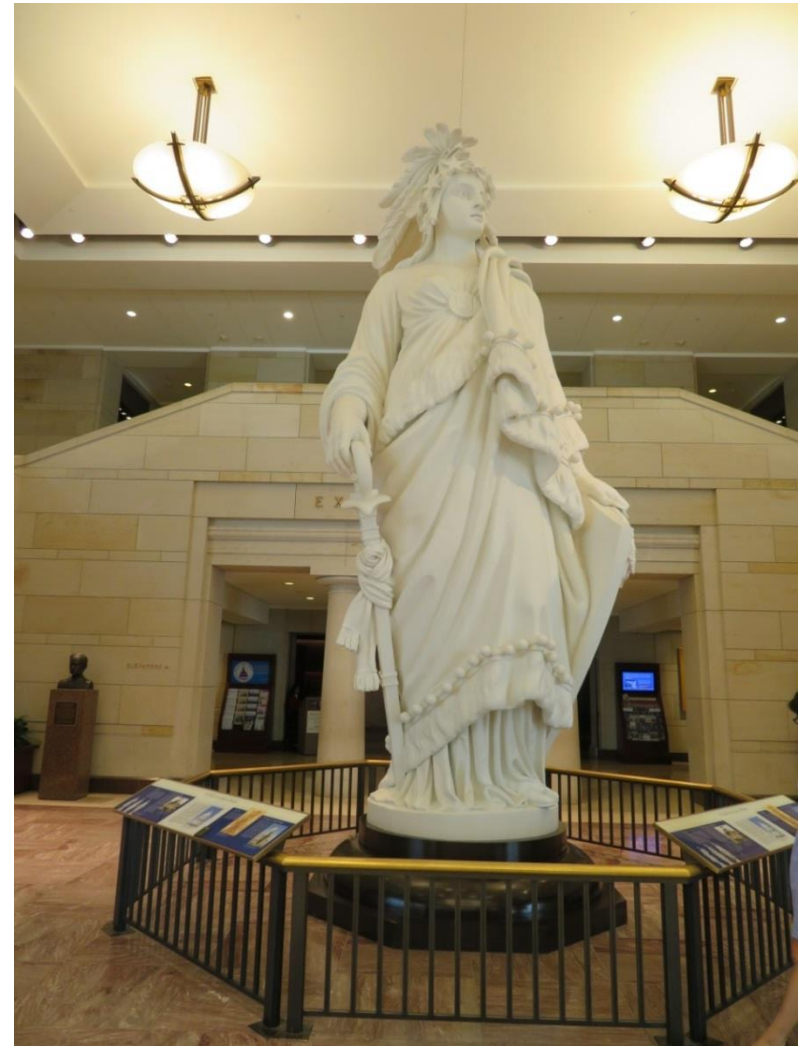
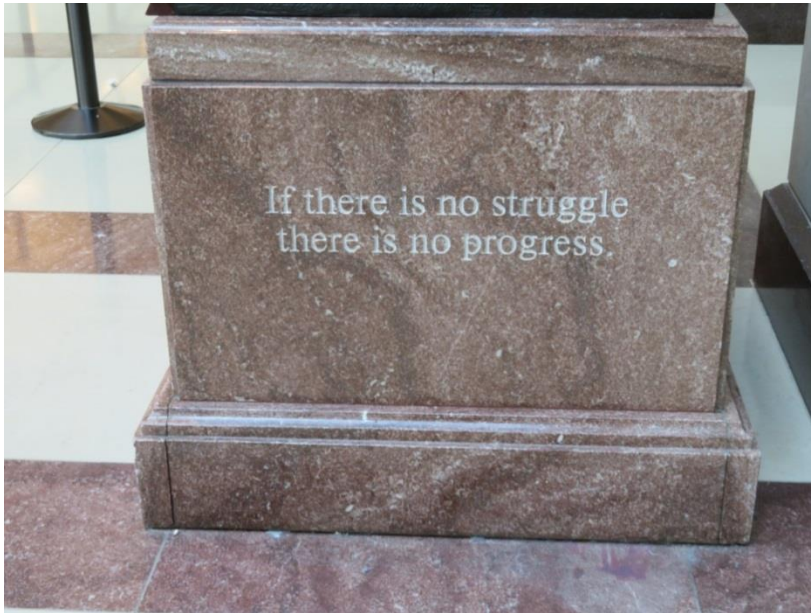
Brochures offer information on self-guided tour and a sneak peak at all of the exciting opportunities at the Center.



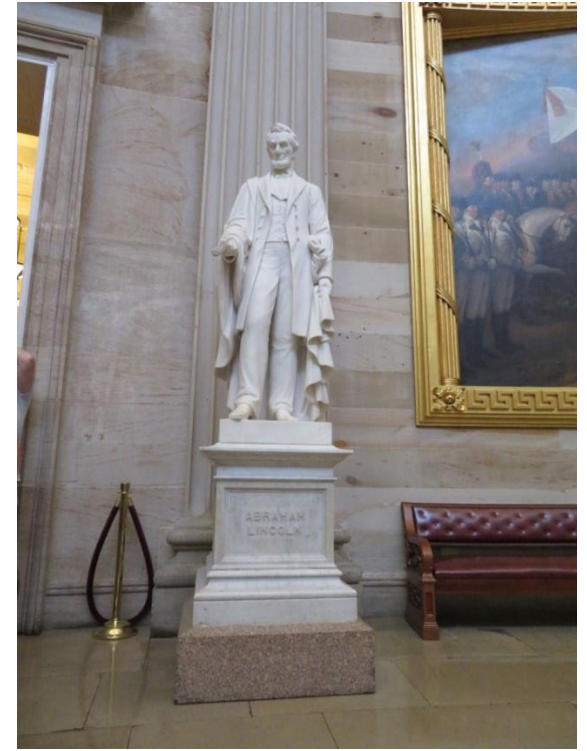
Dignified reception desks efficiently process guests headed to meet with representatives.



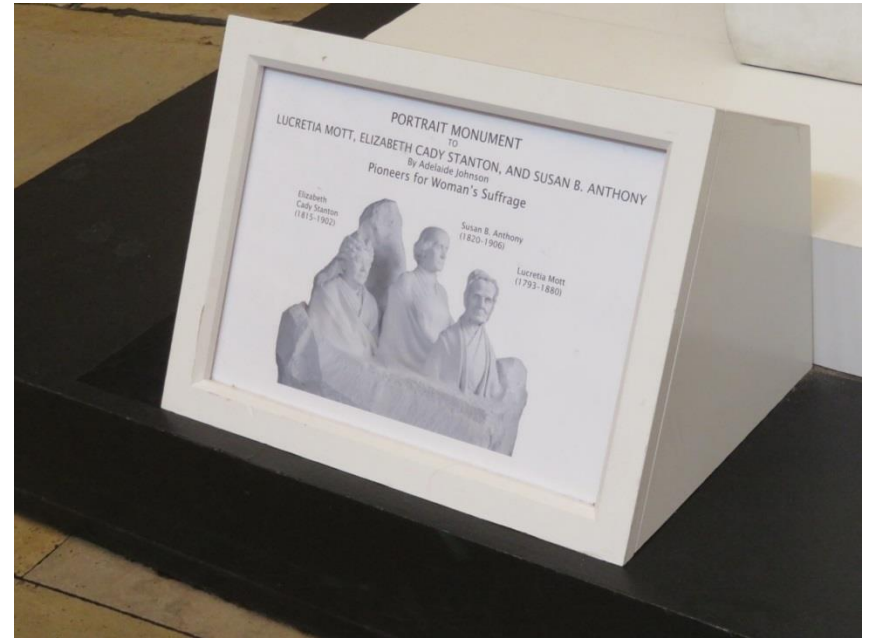
Tasteful lines in the dining area maintain the least cafeteria-like setting possible.



Important works of art from all over the country communicate our history and our strength as a diverse nation.

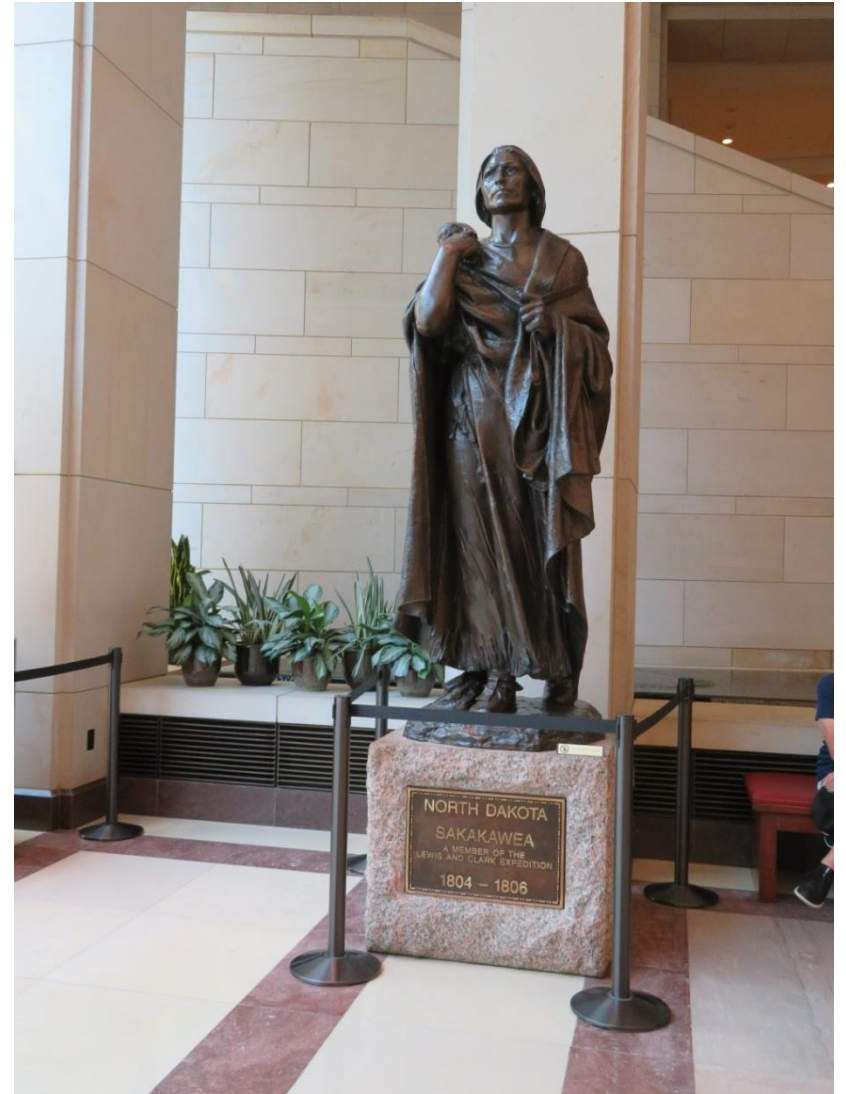




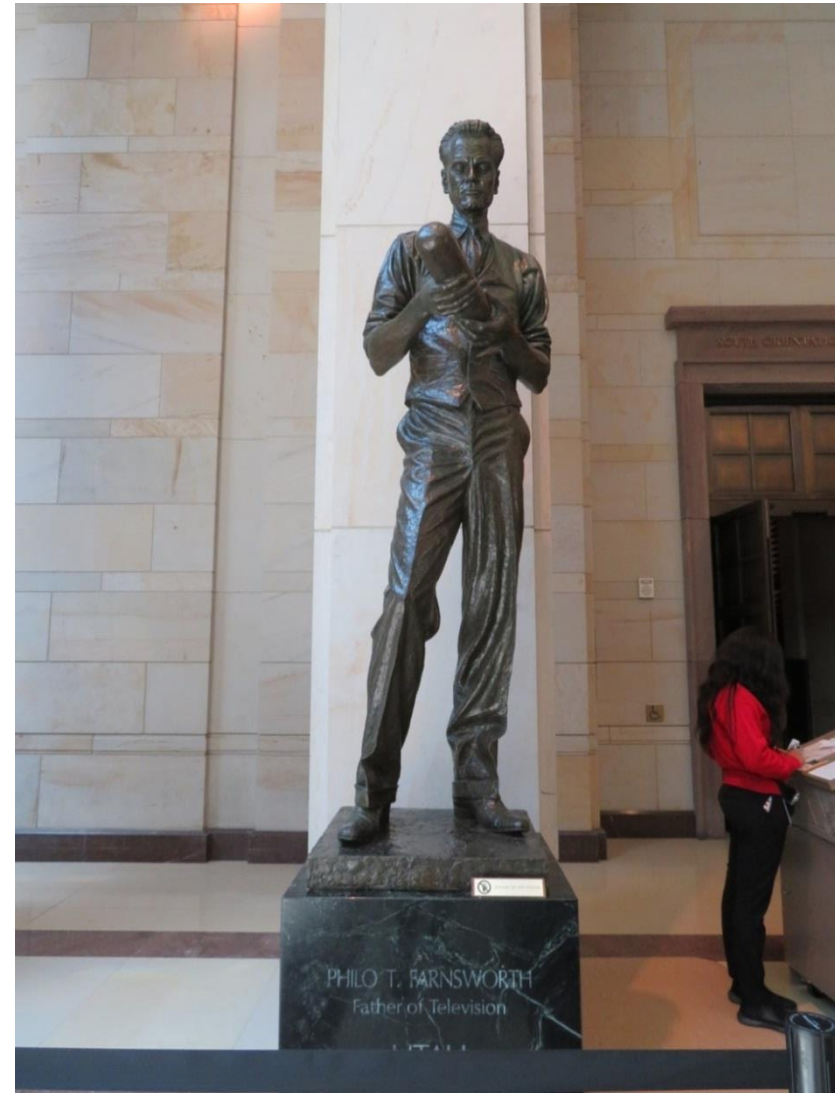


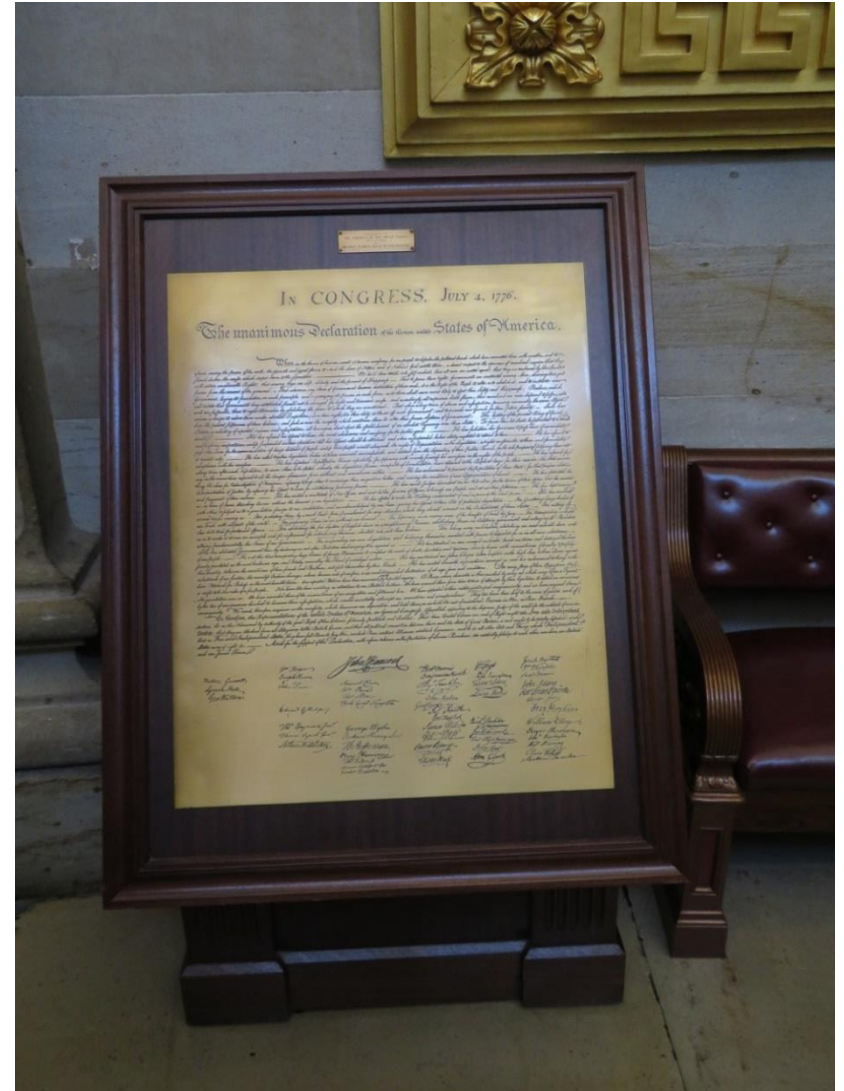


States honor notable citizens with statues in the Capitol and Visitor Center.





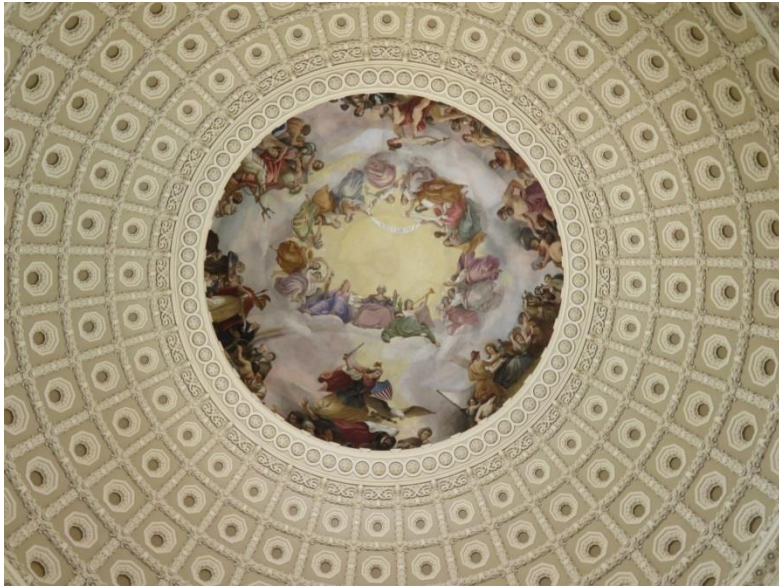




Powerful symbols including the fasces and eagle are throughout the building.



Iconic paintings are embedded in the architecture.



The Apotheosis of Washington adorns the inner dome of the Rotunda.



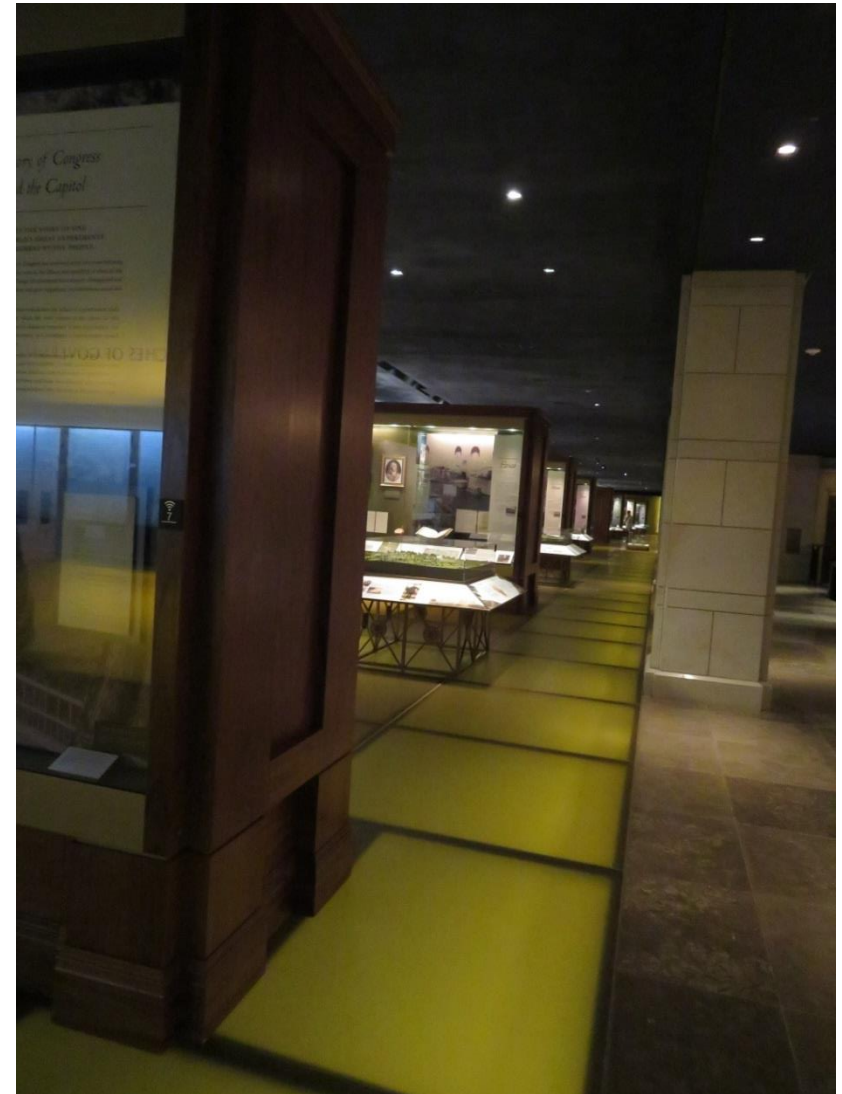
The rotunda frieze tells the story of the great contributions of Americans throughout our history.



Compass Stone marks the center of the building and the original geographic center of the city.



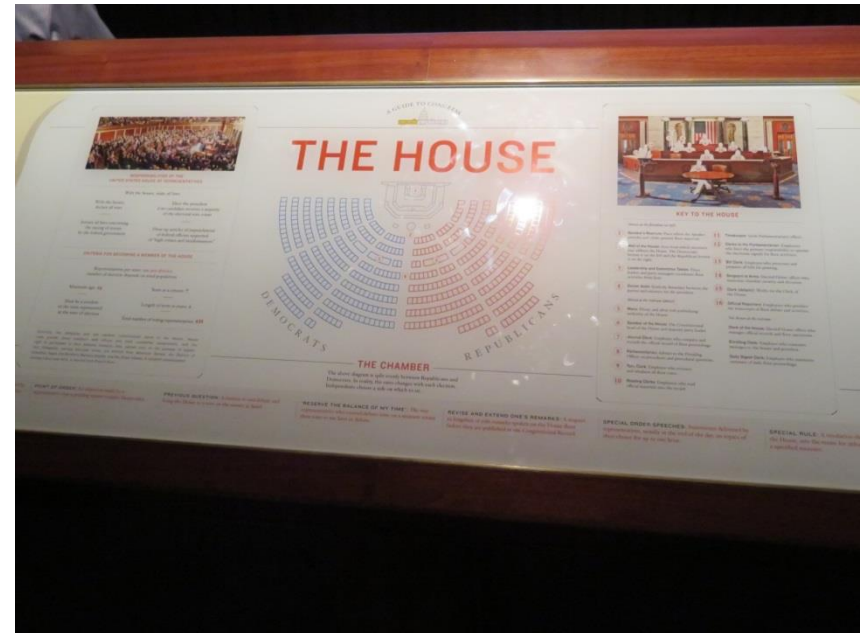
Interactive displays line the walls of the museum halls.



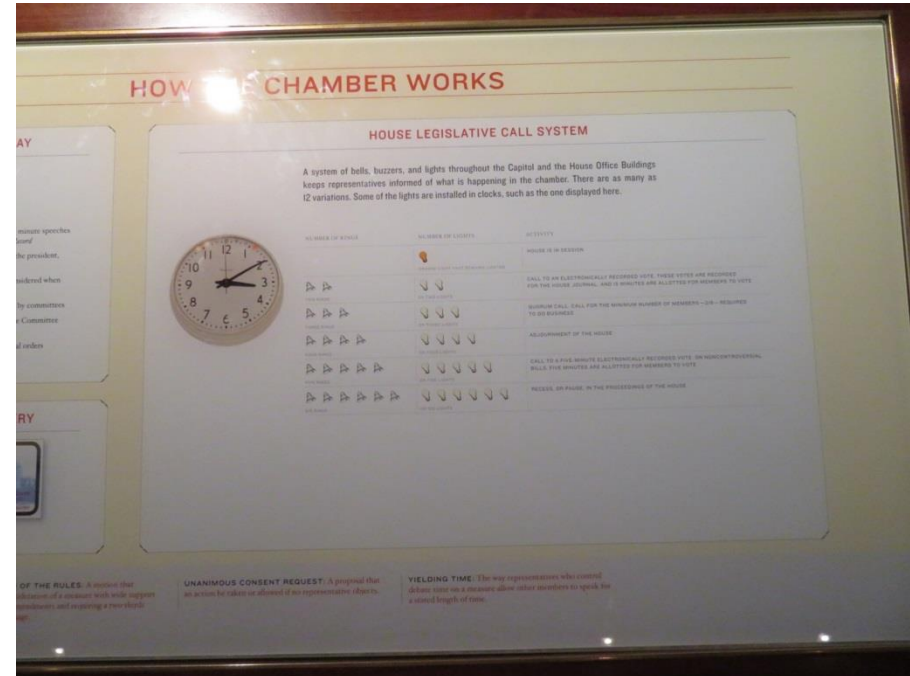


Important artifacts permanently housed here are often sent on tour or on loan around the world with travelling exhibits.





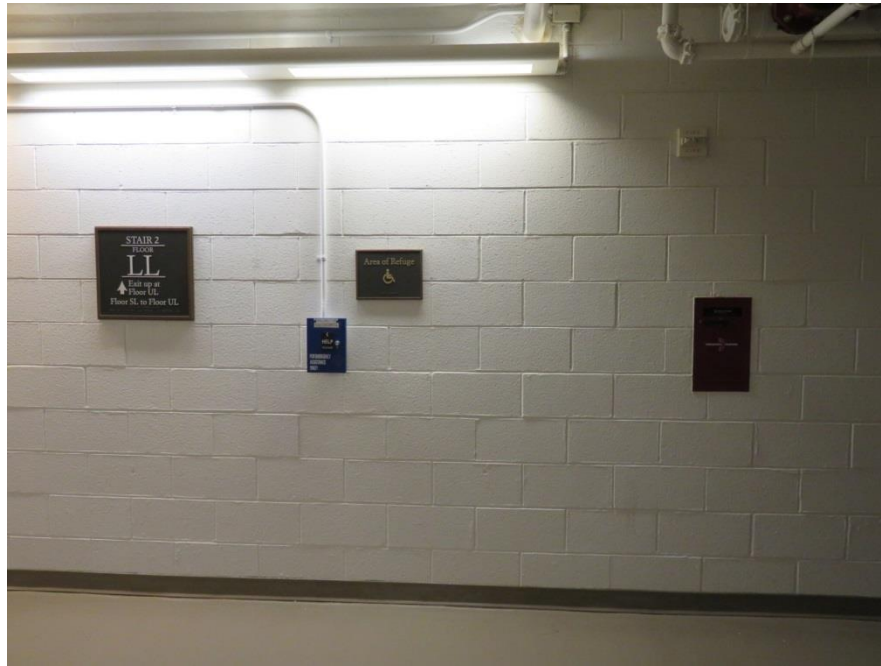
A small theater enables visitors to stop and watch the House proceedings anytime they are in session.



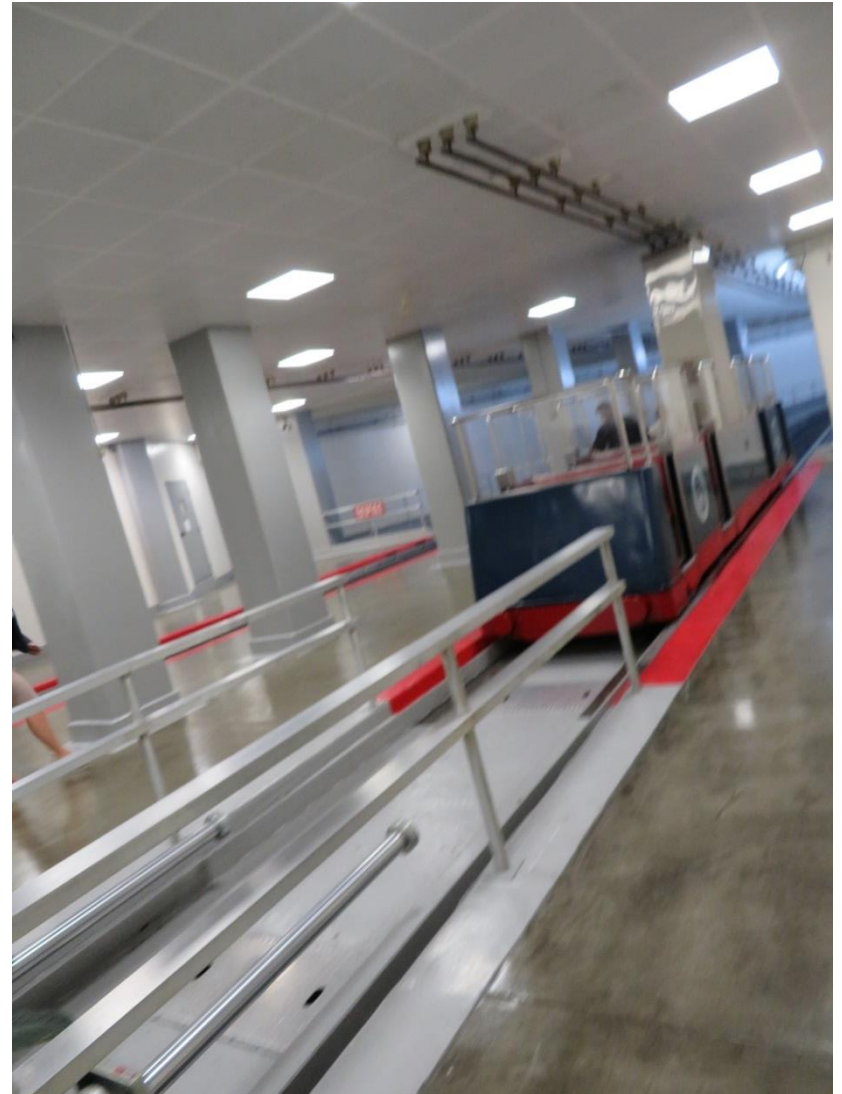
Clocks around the Capitol utilize the House Legislative Call System to inform staff and members of floor procedures.



The Capitol can be seen through glass ceilings from Visitor Center and tunnels.



Emergency stairwells in the Capitol Visitor Center utilize clear signage to direct visitors to safety.

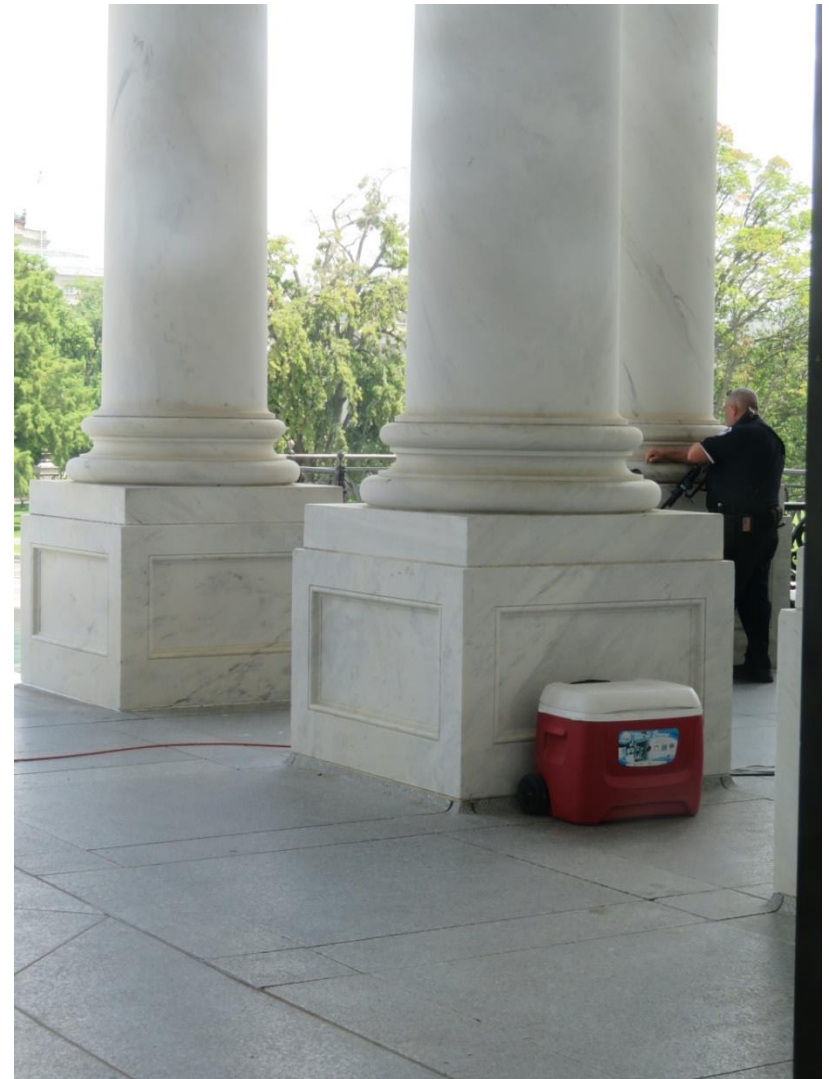


Tunnel System





Separate entrances allow for staff to bypass the visitor center hustle and bustle.



Robust security gives visitors a sense of protection while in the Capitol.