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AOC To Begin Move of Statue of Freedom Model into Capitol Visitor Center

WASHINGTON — Beginning on or about June 2, 2008, the Office of the Architect of the Capitol (AOC) will prepare the plaster model for the Statue of Freedom for its move from the Russell Senate Office Building into the Capitol Visitor Center.

This plaster model – which was used to cast the Statue of Freedom atop the Capitol Dome -- will be the focal point of Emancipation Hall in the new Capitol Visitor Center when it opens to the public.

The model for the Statue of Freedom has been on display in the Russell basement rotunda since January 1993. Some of the skilled AOC craftsmen who installed the model in the Russell Building will be leading this relocation effort. In order to safely move the model and maintain public access through the Russell basement rotunda, a scaffold will be erected around the model which will be enclosed by an eight-foot wall and plastic sheeting. Project activities in the Russell Rotunda are expected to take six to eight weeks.

A monumental statue for the top of the Capitol appeared in Architect Thomas U. Walter's original drawing for the new cast-iron dome, which was authorized in 1855. Walter's drawing showed the outline of a statue representing Liberty; sculptor Thomas Crawford proposed an allegorical figure of "Freedom triumphant in War and Peace."

The model for the statue was originally cast in five main sections from clay sculpted by Crawford in Rome. The model was completed in November 1856 and was shipped to the United States in April 1858. Upon its arrival nearly a year later, the model was assembled in the Old Hall of the House (now National Statuary Hall). In 1860, Clark Mills was selected to cast the bronze statue at his foundry near Washington, D.C. The casting was completed by 1862, and the bronze statue was displayed on Capitol Grounds until the Dome was completed. The five sections were then hoisted up and bolted together atop the tholos, with the head of the statue set in place on December 2, 1863.

"This model stands before the entrance to the Exhibition Hall, where carved into the white marble walls are the words, *Out of Many, One*. The bronze Statue of Freedom stands atop the Capitol Dome on a cast-iron globe encircled with the national motto, *E Pluribus Unum* (*Out of*

Many, One). The connection between the historic Capitol Building and the new CVC is natural and powerful. The AOC is honored to be facilitating this historic move as construction of the CVC nears completion and we prepare the facility to receive guests,” said Stephen T. Ayers, AIA, Acting Architect of the Capitol.

“The model will be the centerpiece of Emancipation Hall. Our visitors will be able to see details of the model for the Statue of Freedom that would be impossible for them to see by looking at the statue on top of the Capitol. We expect that the compelling story of Freedom will be something that visitors of all ages will take with them after they leave the Capitol Visitor Center,” noted Terrie S. Rouse, Chief Executive Office for Visitor Services for the CVC.

For more information about the Statue of Freedom, please visit our Web site: <http://www.aoc.gov/cc/art/freedom.cfm>.

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