

105TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# S. 1508

To authorize the Architect of the Capitol to construct a Capitol Visitor Center under the direction of the United States Capitol Preservation Commission, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

NOVEMBER 9, 1997

Mr. LOTT (for himself, Mr. DASCHLE, and Mr. WARNER) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Rules and Administration

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## A BILL

To authorize the Architect of the Capitol to construct a Capitol Visitor Center under the direction of the United States Capitol Preservation Commission, and for other purposes.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2       *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3       **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4       This Act may be cited as the “Capitol Visitor Center  
5       Authorization Act of 1997”.

1 **SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Architect of the Capitol,  
3 under the direction of the United States Capitol Preserva-  
4 tion Commission, is authorized—

5 (1) to plan, construct, furnish, and equip the  
6 Capitol Visitor Center under the East Plaza of the  
7 United States Capitol with associated improvements  
8 to the Capitol to provide access thereto; and

9 (2) to reconstruct the East Plaza of the United  
10 States Capitol and its environs to enhance its  
11 attractiveness, safety, and security;  
12 in a manner that preserves and maintains Olmstead’s  
13 “General Plan for the Improvement of the United States  
14 Capitol Grounds”, 1874.

15 (b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of the Capitol Visitor  
16 Center shall include—

17 (1) providing reception facilities, educational  
18 materials and exhibits, information, amenities, a gift  
19 shop, and other programs and facilities for members  
20 of the public visiting the United States Capitol; and

21 (2) enhancing the security of the Capitol.

22 (c) DESIGN.—Plans for construction of the Capitol  
23 Visitor Center shall be substantially in accordance with  
24 the Final Design Report dated November 10, 1995, sub-  
25 mitted by the Architect of the Capitol to the Committee  
26 on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of

1 Representatives, the Committee on Rules and Administra-  
2 tion of the Senate, and the United States Capitol Preser-  
3 vation Commission, subject to modifications approved by  
4 the Commission.

5 (d) EXHIBITS.—The informational and educational  
6 experience afforded visitors to the Capitol Visitor Center,  
7 including all exhibits, shall be the responsibility of the  
8 United States Capitol Visitor Board under the direction  
9 of the United States Capitol Preservation Commission, as  
10 approved by the House of Representatives and the Senate.  
11 The Architect of the Capitol, the Clerk of the House of  
12 Representatives, the Secretary of the Senate, the Sergeant  
13 at Arms of the House of Representatives, and the Ser-  
14 geant at Arms and Doorkeeper of the Senate shall provide  
15 staff, support, and resources for the installation, assembly,  
16 and maintenance of all exhibits and other informational  
17 and educational fixtures and equipment. Exhibits and all  
18 informational and educational materials shall be subject  
19 to section 7(b).

20 (e) SECURITY SYSTEMS.—The design, installation,  
21 and maintenance of security systems for the Capitol Visi-  
22 tor Center shall be the responsibility of the Capitol Police  
23 Board in accordance with section 308 of the Legislative  
24 Branch Appropriations Act, 1996 (40 U.S.C. 212a–4) and

1 section 308 of the Legislative Branch Appropriations Act,  
 2 1997 (40 U.S.C. 212a–4a).

3 (f) MANAGEMENT.—After the opening of the Capitol  
 4 Visitor Center to the public, the Architect of the Capitol  
 5 shall administer, maintain, and improve the Capitol Visi-  
 6 tor Center as part of the Capitol Building and Grounds,  
 7 subject to this Act and the oversight of the appropriate  
 8 officers and committees of the House of Representatives  
 9 and the Senate.

10 (g) DEFINITION OF PROJECT.—In this Act, the term  
 11 “project” means the activities and purposes set forth in  
 12 subsections (a) through (f).

13 **SEC. 3. UNITED STATES CAPITOL PRESERVATION COMMIS-**  
 14 **SION; FINANCING PLAN; SECURITY STUDY.**

15 (a) DEVELOPMENT OF PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION  
 16 CAPACITY.—Not later than 30 days after the date of en-  
 17 actment of this Act, the United States Capitol Preserva-  
 18 tion Commission shall meet at the call of either co-chair-  
 19 man for the purpose of establishing a special committee  
 20 of the Commission to carry out the functions of the Com-  
 21 mission in implementing and overseeing the project.

22 (b) FINANCING PLAN.—As soon as practicable after  
 23 the date of enactment of this Act, the United States Cap-  
 24 itol Preservation Commission shall develop a detailed plan

1 for financing the project at the lowest net cost to the Gov-  
2 ernment. The financing plan shall provide for—

3 (1) the acceptance of donations from public and  
4 private sources to be used to minimize the use of or  
5 to repay any appropriated or borrowed funds;

6 (2) the use of any revenues generated by the  
7 Capitol Visitor Center to minimize the use of or to  
8 repay any appropriated or borrowed funds and, to  
9 the extent available, to pay the operating costs of  
10 the Capitol Visitor Center;

11 (3) the use of any other funds available for the  
12 preservation and restoration of the Capitol; and

13 (4) only to the extent necessary, the use of ap-  
14 propriated or borrowed funds.

15 The plan shall be submitted to Committees on Appropria-  
16 tions and House Oversight of the House of Representa-  
17 tives and the Committees on Appropriations and Rules  
18 and Administration of the Senate.

19 (c) REVOLVING FUND.—All funds described in sub-  
20 section (b) shall be deposited in the United States Capitol  
21 Visitor Center Revolving Fund, which is hereby estab-  
22 lished in the Treasury. The Fund shall be managed as  
23 provided in section 9602 of the Internal Revenue Code of  
24 1986 and shall be available, without fiscal year limitation,  
25 to carry out the project, including—

1           (1) the reimbursement of appropriations ac-  
2       counts of the Senate, the House of Representatives,  
3       and the Architect of the Capitol for all costs associ-  
4       ated with the operation of the Capitol Visitor Center  
5       Gift Shop;

6           (2) the payment of costs of the continued con-  
7       servation and preservation of the Capitol Building;  
8       and

9           (3) the payment of costs of further acquisitions  
10      of fine arts as approved by the Senate Commission  
11      on Art or the House Fine Arts Board.

12      (d) SECURITY STUDY.—The Capitol Police Board  
13      shall conduct a study to assess security cost savings and  
14      other benefits resulting from the construction and oper-  
15      ation of the Capitol Visitor Center and shall report the  
16      results of its study to the United States Capitol Preserva-  
17      tion Commission and to the Committees on Appropriations  
18      and House Oversight of the House of Representatives and  
19      the Committees on Appropriations and Rules and Admin-  
20      istration of the Senate.

21      **SEC. 4. CONSTRUCTION.**

22      (a) BUILDING CODES.—The project shall meet design  
23      standards applicable under nationally recognized building  
24      codes, as determined by the Architect of the Capitol. Dur-  
25      ing construction, the Architect shall conduct periodic in-

1 inspections for the purpose of ensuring that such standards  
2 are being met.

3 (b) APPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN LAWS.—The project  
4 shall not be subject to any Federal or State law (including  
5 law of the District of Columbia) relating to taxes, building  
6 codes, studies, reports, permits, or inspections.

7 **SEC. 5. GIFTS.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—For the purposes of carrying out  
9 the project, gifts or donations of services or property may  
10 be received, accepted, held, and disposed of, subject to the  
11 provisions of the plan promulgated under section 3.

12 (b) TREATMENT UNDER TAX LAWS.—Any gift ac-  
13 cepted in accordance with the plan promulgated under sec-  
14 tion 3 shall be considered a gift to the United States for  
15 the purposes of income, estate, and gift tax laws of the  
16 United States.

17 **SEC. 6. AUTHORITY TO CONTRACT.**

18 Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Ar-  
19 chitect of the Capitol may establish competitive procedures  
20 for work on the project by the use of prequalification  
21 standards and may award contracts on the basis of con-  
22 tractor qualifications as well as price. Such procedures  
23 and contract awards shall be final and conclusive upon all  
24 officers of the Government.

1 **SEC. 7. CAPITOL VISITOR BOARD.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—

3 (1) AUTHORITY OF CAPITOL VISITOR BOARD.—

4 The Capitol Visitor Board, under the direction of  
5 the United States Capitol Preservation Commission  
6 and subject to prior approval of the House of Rep-  
7 resentatives and the Senate, shall establish the Cap-  
8 itol Visitor Center operations, tour, exhibit and edu-  
9 cation policies, including—

10 (A) establishing hours of operation, tour  
11 content, and tour schedules;

12 (B) producing or selecting films, videos,  
13 exhibits, publications, and other items of an  
14 educational nature; and

15 (C) approving items for sale by the Capitol  
16 Visitor Center gift shop.

17 (2) CONSULTATION.—In carrying out this sec-  
18 tion, the Capitol Visitor Board shall consult with the  
19 Historians of the Senate and House of Representa-  
20 tives, the Senate Commission on Art, the House  
21 Fine Arts Board, and any advisory board of the  
22 United States Capitol Preservation Commission des-  
23 ignated for this purpose by the Commission.

24 (3) OTHER AUTHORITIES NOT AFFECTED.—

25 (A) SECURITY.—Nothing in this section  
26 affects the authority of the Capitol Police



1 Board with respect to security of the Capitol,  
2 the Capitol Visitor Center, or their environs.

3 (B) SENATE COMMISSION ON ART.—Noth-  
4 ing in this section affects the authority of the  
5 Senate Commission on Art with respect to the  
6 Old Senate Chamber and the Old Supreme  
7 Court Chamber.

8 (b) EXHIBITS AND INFORMATIONAL AND EDU-  
9 CATIONAL MATERIAL.—

10 (1) EXHIBITS.—Exhibits, including any audio,  
11 video, or demonstrative presentations, shall illustrate  
12 the history and the Constitutional role of the United  
13 States Congress and the history, including art and  
14 architectural history, of the Capitol.

15 (2) INFORMATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL MATE-  
16 RIALS.—To assist visitors, the Capitol Visitor Board  
17 shall publish or provide for informational and edu-  
18 cational materials for free distribution to the public,  
19 in accordance with title 44, United States Code. Ma-  
20 terials provided for sale may be purchased through  
21 approved procedures for the Capitol Visitor Center  
22 gift shop and any revenues produced shall be depos-  
23 ited to the United States Capitol Visitor Center Re-  
24 volving Fund account as approved by the United  
25 States Capitol Preservation Commission.

1 (c) CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER GIFT SHOP.—

2 (1) PURPOSE.—The Capitol Visitor Center  
3 Board shall establish and operate the Capitol Visitor  
4 Center Gift Shop in accordance with policies ap-  
5 proved by the United States Capitol Preservation  
6 Commission and the appropriate oversight commit-  
7 tees of each House.

8 (2) PROCEEDS OF SALES OR SERVICES.—All  
9 monies received from sales or services of the Capitol  
10 Visitor Center Gift Shop shall be deposited in the  
11 United States Capitol Visitor Center Revolving Fund  
12 established by section 3(c) of this Act.

13 **SEC. 8. AMENDMENTS RELATING TO THE UNITED STATES**  
14 **CAPITOL PRESERVATION COMMISSION.**

15 (a) PURPOSES.—Section 801(a) of the Arizona-Idaho  
16 Conservation Act of 1988 (40 U.S.C. 188a(a)) is amend-  
17 ed—

18 (1) by striking “and” at the end of paragraph

19 (2); and

20 (2) by striking paragraph (3) and inserting the  
21 following:

22 “(3) carrying out functions assigned by the  
23 Capitol Visitor Center Authorization Act of 1997;  
24 and

1           “(4) conducting other activities that directly fa-  
2           cilitate, encourage, or support the purposes specified  
3           in the preceding paragraphs.”.

4           (b) STAFF SUPPORT.—Section 801(e) Arizona-Idaho  
5           Conservation Act of 1988 (40 U.S.C. 188a(e)) is amended  
6           by inserting “Clerk of the House of Representatives, the  
7           Secretary of the Senate, the Sergeant at Arms of the  
8           House of Representatives, the Sergeant at Arms and  
9           Doorkeeper of the Senate, the” after “The”.

10          (c) DELEGATION.—Section 801 of the Arizona-Idaho  
11          Conservation Act of 1988 (40 U.S.C. 188a) is amended  
12          by adding at the end the following:

13          “(f) DELEGATION.—In addition to the special com-  
14          mittee provided for by section 3(a), the United States  
15          Capitol Preservation Commission may delegate any func-  
16          tions to 1 or more special committees if the membership  
17          of each such committee is drawn equally from the House  
18          of Representatives and the Senate.”.

19          (d) FUND TRANSFERS.—Section 803 of the Arizona-  
20          Idaho Conservation Act of 1988 (40 U.S.C. 188a–2) is  
21          amended by adding at the end the following:

22          “(f) TRANSFERS.—Not later than 30 days after the  
23          date of enactment of this Act, the balance in the account  
24          in excess of \$250,000 shall be transferred to the fund es-

1 tablished by section 3(c) of the Capitol Visitor Center Au-  
 2 thorization Act of 1997.”.

3 (e) CAPITOL VISITOR BOARD.—

4 (1) RENAMING.—Section 441 of the Legislative  
 5 Reorganization Act of 1970 (40 U.S.C. 851) is  
 6 amended by striking “Capitol Guide Board” each  
 7 place it appears and inserting “Capitol Visitor  
 8 Board”.

9 (2) INFORMATION.—Section 441(a) of the Leg-  
 10 islative Reorganization Act of 1970 (40 U.S.C.  
 11 851(a)) is amended by inserting after “Architect of  
 12 the Capitol,” the following: “the Secretary of the  
 13 Senate, the Clerk of the House of Representatives,”.

14 **SEC. 9. REPEAL.**

15 (a) IN GENERAL.—The provisions of title III of the  
 16 National Visitor Center Facilities Act of 1968 (40 U.S.C.  
 17 831) shall be repealed to the extent that such provisions  
 18 are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act.

19 (b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 301 of the  
 20 National Visitor Center Facilities Act of 1968 (40 U.S.C.  
 21 831) is amended by striking “the United States Capitol  
 22 Historical Society,”.

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