

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

For Immediate Release
August 29, 2023

Dena Potter
(804) 786-0282
Dena.Potter@dgs.virginia.gov

New General Assembly Building Complete, Public Opening to be held October 11, 2023

RICHMOND, VA – The Virginia General Assembly today announced completion of the new General Assembly Building and plans to open the building to the public in October.

The Department of General Services (DGS), which managed construction of the legislative branch building, obtained a Certificate of Occupancy marking completion of the building in August. General Assembly members and staff, House and Senate Clerks and their staffs, and the Division of Legislative Services will move into the building over the next several weeks. During this time, entry is limited to legislative branch staff and maintenance and operations support teams.

On October 11, 2023, the General Assembly will celebrate completion of the building with a dedication ceremony. Following that event, the building will be open to the public, including expansive food services on the first floor, on weekdays and days the General Assembly is in session. Further details about the October 11 opening will be made available at a later date.

“After experiencing many years of conservation and construction as well as overcoming many obstacles, I’m delighted that the new General Assembly Building is now finished and opening soon,” said **Virginia House of Delegates Speaker C. Todd Gilbert**. “This greatly anticipated and first purpose-built building for America’s oldest continuous lawmaking body is a win for the people of Virginia whom we serve. The new GAB will enable constituents, visitors and all interested parties to more easily observe and actively participate in the lawmaking process. It’s a beautiful new addition to our capital’s skyline and a building worthy of the consequential work that will be conducted within its walls. I’m also thankful for the enormously time-consuming and diligent work of the Clerks and everyone involved in helping us reach this historic milestone.”

“Planning for this building started many years ago, and it’s been wonderful to see it rise on the footprint of the old General Assembly Building and incorporate a portion of the historic 1912 building façade into a modern legislative office space,” said **Sen. Mamie E. Locke, Chair, Senate Rules Committee**. “This blending of old and new is indicative of the legislative body itself, tracing its roots to 1619 but taking a contemporary approach to lawmaking with an eye always on Virginia’s future. This building will serve as a welcome space for elected leaders and Virginia’s residents to

exchange ideas, learn from one another and work together to make Virginia better. I'm excited to see its doors open and am thankful to all those who played a part in getting us to this moment."

"Like so many, I'm excited that we've now completed the work necessary to fully occupy this special place at the heart of Virginia's ongoing experiment in representative self-government," said **G. Paul Nardo, Clerk of the Virginia House of Delegates and Keeper of the Rolls of the Commonwealth.**

"Preparing for a legislative session takes a lot of detailed planning, thoughtful organizing and close coordination with many entities to ensure the people's business is conducted in the most timely, deliberate and transparent manner possible. The new GAB will strengthen and improve these efforts. It also underscores the continuing resolve of elected legislative leaders to help facilitate more understanding of, learning about and involvement in the conduct of the people's business."

"As we've seen over the past few years as Virginia's General Assembly has met in repurposed space, inside clear safety boxes, on the grass of Capitol Square, and even online, this body will do whatever it takes to get the people's business accomplished. That it now will get to do that important work in a purpose-built building that not only will streamline their efforts but offer a more enjoyable experience for the public who visits to participate in the lawmaking process is what we've worked so hard to achieve with this new GAB," said **Senate Clerk Susan Clarke Schaar.** "So many people played a role in shepherding this project from a small idea to the beautiful addition to downtown Richmond you see today. We still have work to do with the move, but when we open this building to the public it will be a great day for the Commonwealth."

Joe Damico, DGS Director, added: "We are excited to get this project across the finish line, and we're thrilled for elected officials, employees and visitors to finally see and experience this remarkable building. We're grateful to the House and Senate Clerks for their guidance and patience throughout this process, and thankful to our private design and construction partners for their attention to detail that makes this building stand out among legislative buildings across the country."

Legislative offices moved out of the old General Assembly Building in 2017 for construction of the new building. Constructed on the same footprint as the building it replaced, the new GAB is 414,000 square feet with 14 stories above grade and one below. The Modern Classical design incorporates the existing original 1912 facade, which was stabilized in place during demolition. The lower four floors include various public functions, including committee rooms, a cafeteria and other useful meeting facilities. It is connected via tunnels to the new parking deck at the corner of Broad and 9th Streets, which opened earlier this year, and to the Capitol's underground Visitor's Center. The tunnel to the Capitol is expected to open ahead of the 2024 session of the General Assembly.

For more information, visit <https://viriniageneralassembly.gov/>.

#