



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**WASHINGTON CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY MERGES WITH DC SPORTS
AND ENTERTAINMENT COMMISSION TO FORM THE WASHINGTON
CONVENTION AND SPORTS AUTHORITY**

*Combination creates synergized organization to bring first-rate events to District
Inaugural Board Meeting Convenes October 1st*

(Washington) – September 30, 2009- The new Washington Convention and Sports Authority will hold its inaugural board meeting on Thursday, October 1st at 9:00am at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center. The newly created Board is a result of the merger between the Washington Convention Center Authority and the DC Sports and Entertainment Commission. This merger will create one synergized organization with a broader vision for increasing economic impact through the promotion of conventions and meetings as well as sports and entertainment offerings for the District of Columbia.

“The Washington Convention and Sports Authority will lead the way as one of the city’s premier catalysts for economic activity – not only by running a world-class convention and meetings facility, but also through the promotion and coordination of key sports and entertainment activities for the District,” said Beverly Perry, board chair of the Washington Convention and Sports Authority. “The new Authority will only enhance the city’s offerings for the benefit of visitors, residents and the business community.”

The Authority will own Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Stadium and Nationals Park and be responsible for securing sports and entertainment programming in Washington, DC. There will be a separate Sports, Entertainment and Special Events Division dedicated to provide these services, while the core Convention Center Operations team remains unchanged. Also, as part of the merger, the facility maintenance tasks previously performed by the DC Sports and Entertainment Commission will be assumed by the District’s Department of Real Estate Services (DRES).

Gregory A. O’Dell will head the Authority as President and Chief Executive Officer. Former CEO of the Sports and Entertainment Commission Erik Moses will serve as Senior Vice President and Managing Director of the Sports, Entertainment and Special Events Division, while former Deputy General Manager of the Washington Convention Center Authority Samuel Thomas will serve as Senior Vice President and General Manager of the Convention Center Operations Division.

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“Our convention stakeholders and customers will continue to work with the same dedicated team that has supported them to consistently execute successful events at our award-winning convention center,” added Gregory A. O’Dell, president and CEO of the Authority. “This merger will further enhance the previous great work of the Commission, bringing more sports and entertainment events to the District like last year’s inaugural EagleBank Bowl.”

The Authority’s Board of Directors will grow from nine to 11, with Emily Durso, president of the Hotel Association of Washington, DC and William Hall, the current vice chairman of the Sports and Entertainment Commission, joining the board Oct. 1. Mr. Hall will also serve as chair of the newly created Sports and Entertainment Committee as part of the new Authority’s governance structure.

About the Washington Convention and Sports Authority

The Washington Convention and Sports Authority owns and manages the *Walter E. Washington Convention Center*, which has proven to anchor the hospitality and tourism economy of the District of Columbia, generating over \$400 million annually in total economic impact for the District. The Authority also owns and manages the *Stadium-Armory campus* which includes *Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Stadium*, the *DC Armory* and the surrounding Festival Grounds, as well as serving as the owner and landlord for *Nationals Park*. The Authority creates economic and community benefits for the District through its promotion of hospitality, athletic, entertainment and cultural events.

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