New England Region

Abraham A. Ribicoff Federal Building and Courthouse

450 Main Street
Hartford, CT 06103

The Abraham A. Ribicoff Federal Building and Courthouse is an eight -floor, low-rise building in the Modernism style. The courtrooms of the building flank the central courtyard. A granite foundation supports tan -colored brick walls with marble trim. The two-story entrance is flanked by contemporary marble columns.

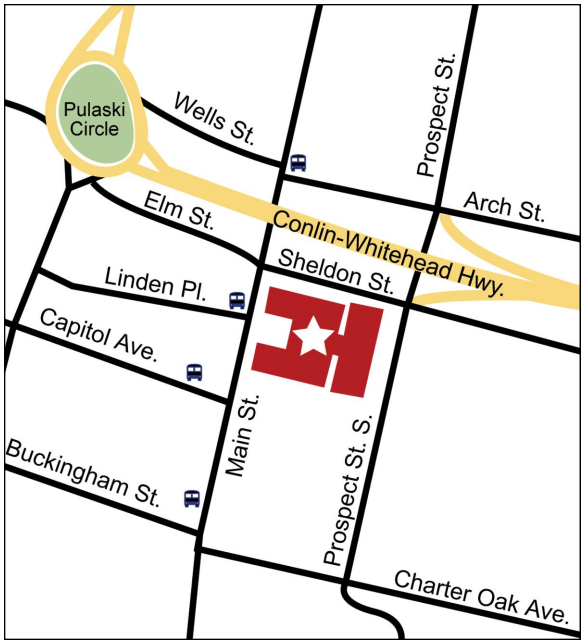
A Short Walking Tour, Hartford Public Library, 2007

The Abraham A. Ribicoff Federal Building and Courthouse

Public Transportation: CT Transit Bus Service, Amtrak Train Station, and taxis.

Parking: There are several parking lots and garages within walking distance of the building.

Concessions: There are several restaurants and coffee shops within a few blocks of the building.



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Tenants

Ribicoff Building Directory

U.S. Bankruptcy Court, State of Connecticut
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
U.S. District Court, State of Connecticut
U.S. Marshals Service
U.S. Probation Office

The entrance of the Abraham A. Ribicoff Federal Building. Photo by www.connect.in.com

The elevator lobby

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History

The Abraham A. Ribicoff Federal Building and Courthouse was designed by Prentice & Frid. Construction was completed in 1963. In 1980, the building was renamed the Abraham A. Ribicoff Federal Building in 1980.

The Abraham A. Ribicoff Federal Building and Courthouse. Photo by R.W. Sutcliffe, photographers.

Abraham Alexander Ribicoff (1910 - 1998) a Representative and a Senator from Connecticut; born in New Britain, Hartford County, Conn., April 9, 1910; attended the public schools and New York University; graduated from the University of Chicago Law School in 1933 and was admitted to the bar the same year; member, Connecticut legislature 1938-1942; judge of Hartford Police Court 1941-1943, 1945-1947; chairman, assembly of municipal court judges for the State of Connecticut 1941-1942; member of the Charter Revision Commission of the city of Hartford 1945-1946; hearing examiner, Connecticut Fair Employment Practices Act 1937-1939; elected as a Democrat to the Eighty-first and Eighty-second Congresses (January 3, 1949-January 3, 1953); was not a candidate for renomination in 1952 and was unsuccessful for election to fill a vacancy in the United States Senate; Governor of Connecticut 1955-1961, when he was sworn in as Secretary of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare in the Cabinet of President John F. Kennedy; elected to the United States Senate in 1962; reelected in 1968 and 1974 and served from January 3, 1963, to January 3, 1981; was not a candidate for reelection in 1980; chairman, Committee on Government Operations (Ninety-fourth and Ninety-fifth Congresses), Committee on Governmental Affairs (Ninety-fifth and Ninety-sixth Congresses); practiced law in New York City and resided in Cornwall Bridge, Conn. Died in New York City on February 22, 1998; interment at Cornwall Cemetery, Cornwall, Conn.

American National Biography; Scribner Encyclopedia of American Lives; Ribicoff, Abraham, with Paul Danceau. America Can Make It! New York: Atheneum, 1972; Ribicoff, Abraham, and Jon O. Newman. Politics: The American Way. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1973.

Abraham Ribicoff

Abraham Alexander Ribicoff was an American Democratic Party politician. He served in the U.S. Congress, as governor of Connecticut and as President John F. Kennedy's Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare. He was Connecticut's first and to date only Jewish governor. One of the highlights of his career came in 1968, when he spoke for George McGovern at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago. He accused Chicago Mayor Richard J. Daley of Gestapo-like tactics in suppressing Vietnam War protests outside. Daley shouted back angrily from the floor, and the convention erupted in clamor. Ribicoff calmly held his ground in a moment of high drama.

The building in Hartford is very familiar to Abraham A. Ribicoff. As a lawyer, he appeared in Federal court there, and in the 18 years he was a United States Senator from Connecticut, he had an office in it. And, as he pointed out yesterday, "Many of the judges who sit in that court, I nominated to the Federal bench." Mr. Ribicoff, a Democrat who served as Governor and Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, will find the building he spoke of even more familiar after noon next Monday, when it will be renamed the Abraham A. Ribicoff Federal Building U. S. Courthouse. “I'm deeply honored and very pleased," said Mr. Ribicoff.

New York Times, September 11, 1981

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History

Lyndon B. Johnson, President of the United States: 1963-1969

Remarks at the Unveiling of a Portrait of Abraham Ribicoff
March 3, 1965

Secretary Celebrezze, Senator Ribicoff and Mrs. Ribicoff, members of the Cabinet, ladies and gentlemen:

One day not so long ago, I was asked by one of my assistants if I would like to attend a hanging. I was understandably hesitant. But I did inquire who was to be the honoree. I was told that they were going to hang a United States Senator, my old and good and warm friend of many years, Abe Ribicoff.

I said—with caution befitting a former Senator—"You better double-check that. It is just possible they got the wrong man." But all of us who know him, have served with him and cherish him as a friend, know that Abe Ribicoff has never been and will never be the "wrong man" for any honor or trust that is bestowed upon him.

I am very proud to be able to be at this "hanging" of his portrait in this vital department of the United States Government. The work of this great department is concerned with the very foundation of our entire society: With education on which our free society stands. With health on which so much of the happiness of our people rests. With welfare, which is the mirror of what we think of ourselves and our fellow man.

Since its inception this Department of Health, Education, and Welfare has been a demanding challenge. The size and complexities of the task here are enormous.... So long as this department exists, the tenure of our honoree today, Abe Ribicoff as Secretary, is going to be remembered as a landmark, because he charted a course of vision and courage which we still follow. We followed it on education as I said, yesterday. We follow it on consumer protection. We follow it on prevention of water and air pollution, on health insurance for the aged, and constructive welfare services, and other measures.

When Congress did not immediately accept all of these measures, the Secretary, I guess, decided the best way to lick them was to join them. So he decided he would become a Senator. And Connecticut gave him a vote as well as a voice and the entire Nation is grateful. I doubt that Senator Ribicoff feels as Abraham Lincoln did when he once said: "Being elected to Congress—though I am very grateful to our friends for having done it—has not pleased me as much as I had expected."

The Senator from Connecticut has much to be pleased about since he returned to the Halls of Congress. In less than 3 years since he entered the Senate, we have had the Ribicoff-Mills Mental Retardation Planning Act; the Ribicoff Pesticide Control Act; the Ribicoff-Roberts Clean Air Act. Now this year the Senator has been named Chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Executive Reorganization. I am hopeful that we can look to his talents and insights to help accomplish so many of the reforms that have long been overdue in the executive branch.

Oliver Cromwell once told his portrait painter to "use all your skill to paint my picture truly like me and not to flatter me at all—otherwise I will never pay one farthing for it." I haven't seen this portrait, but I know that the truth about Abe Ribicoff, whether of his countenance or career, is more flattering than the publicity other men might buy.

I am very honored and very proud to come here and be with you this morning to unveil this painting of the newsboy from Hartford who rose to be Congressman, Governor, Cabinet member, and a Senator of the United States—Abe Ribicoff.

Read more at the American Presidency Project: Lyndon B. Johnson: Remarks at the Unveiling of a Portrait of Abraham Ribicoff
http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=27453#ixzz1lkZ689nn

Abraham A. Ribicoff Federal Building and Courthouse

Green Initiatives

Following the successful 2007 roof replacement and exterior restoration of the Abraham Ribicoff U.S. Courthouse and Federal Building, Classic Site Solutions, Inc. was awarded the new contract for roof replacement and exterior masonry repairs for the Abraham Ribicoff Federal Annex Building. The roof at this large and busy federal facility was leaking, and the granite veneer suffered from cracks and moisture intrusion resulting in water damage to offices and judges' chambers. Despite the urgency of the situation, the facility could not be vacated to allow for repairs; therefore, work had to be performed in a manner that minimized noise levels and reduced the effects of dust, odors, and other irritants that would disrupt the proceedings ongoing within the building. Additionally, compliance with strict security requirements for operational federal courthouses was a priority.

Significant aspects of the project included:

- 18,000 square feet of roofing membrane, tapered roof insulation, flashing, and metal trim were replaced
- 4,000 lineal feet of joint sealant were replaced
- 22,000 square feet of brick and granite veneer were cleaned, restored, and waterproofed.
- 250 lineal feet of limestone cap stones and coping were removed, repaired, and replaced.

In 2008 U.S Citizensship and Immigration Services officially opened the new Hartford Office in an effort to transform it into a more secure, efficient and customer-friendly agency. Relocated from the fourth floor to the first floor of the Ribicoff Federal Building, the USCIS Hartford Office has been expanded into the new 26,000 square-foot space. Now easily accessible from the main entrance of the federal building, the new office boasts a modern color scheme, spacious waiting areas, improved traffic flow, more private offices for interviews, a reception area with InfoPass kiosks for making appointments, and an innovative layout that allows for efficient service to the public. It also features separate rooms for applicant interviews creating a private, comfortable, and welcoming atmosphere. The project, awarded to Lumus Construction of Woburn, MA replaced the 18,500 square foot USCIS office on the third floor of the building that was crowded to the point of congestion. Green materials were used throughout the project, including flooring made from recycled materials, GREENGUARD certified furniture, finishes with low emissions, and additional windows to allow natural light into interior spaces.

USCIS News Release, February 2008

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Art in Architecture

The GSA Art in Architecture Program commissions the nation's leading artists to create large-scale works of art for new federal buildings.

"Citizen", a metal sculpture by Timothy Woodman is in the Ribicoff Annex.

Timothy Woodman is a sculptor and painter with degrees from Cornell University and Yale University School of Art. Exhibiting since 1978, his work is included in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Newark Museum, Memphis Brooks Museum of Art and others. He is represented by Victoria Munroe Fine Art in Boston, The Drawing Room Gallery in East Hampton and Albert Merola Gallery in Provincetown.

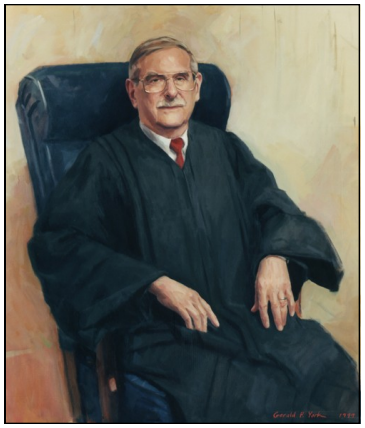
"Citizen" by Timothy Woodman

In the building, but not part of the official Art & Architecture program:

Portrait of The Honorable Robert Krechevsky
by Gerald P. York
The Honorable Robert Krechevsky was a former Chief U.S. Bankruptcy Judge, State of Connecticut
Oil on linen, 34 x 40 inches

Gerald P. York graduated from Yale College. His clients include Procter & Gamble and Becton, Dickinson & Company, Gulfstream Aerospace, Becton, and Yale University. As the result of a competition Mr. York was selected by the chairman of Sotheby's to paint the official university portrait of the president of Yale in 1995. Mr. York has won numerous awards for his work.

"My primary interest is to portray the subject in a way that allows the viewer to experience the presence of the subject."



Portrait of
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