GRIFFIN CAPITAL ESSENTIAL ASSET REIT

For Immediate Release

Griffin Capital Essential Asset REIT Adds Real Estate Industry Veterans to its Executive Management Line-up

Key Positions Support the Company's Vision and Strategic Expansion

EL SEGUNDO, Calif. (November 5, 2019) – Griffin Capital Essential Asset REIT, Inc. (GCEAR) announced the addition of three highly-regarded industry veterans to its executive management team in support of the company's strategic expansion. Michael Escalante, Chief Executive Officer, announced the hiring of the following seasoned real estate professionals to diversify its equity base, enhance its industrial market capabilities and expand its in-house legal team.

- **David Congdon**, *Managing Director, Corporate Strategy*, brings more than 30 years of real estate experience in leading teams and operating partners, raising and deploying capital, and managing portfolios and assets on behalf of institutional investors and high net worth individuals. Prior to joining GCEAR, Mr. Congdon held executive positions for multiple key investment platforms at Hines Interests Limited Partnership, managing equity investments totaling $3.2 billion from 1998 to 2018.

- **Craig Phillips**, *Managing Director, Industrial Properties,* brings more than 30 years of experience in industrial real estate development and acquisitions on behalf of private and institutional clients. With an emphasis on speculative development, build to suits, and urban redevelopment, he has completed nearly $1 billion in commercial real estate projects and delivered over seven million square feet of Class A facilities throughout the Midwestern and Western United States. Prior to joining GCEAR, he served as Vice President, Acquisitions at ML Realty Partners, LLC.

- **Nina Momtazee Sitzer**, *Executive Vice President and General Counsel*, brings over 25 years of experience in a broad range of commercial real estate transactions including asset and portfolio acquisitions and dispositions, development, and management and leasing agreements. Prior to joining GCEAR, she previously served as a partner in the real estate group at the law firm of DLA Piper LLP (US) in Chicago.

"We are thrilled to welcome Dave, Craig, and Nina into our existing team of talented real estate professionals," said Mr. Escalante. "Their multi-decade, hands-on experience and expertise will enable GCEAR to expand its capital sourcing into the institutional investor arena, and source industrial properties across all major metropolitan areas while also enhancing the value of the company's existing industrial portfolio. Expansion into these areas not only benefits our core active asset management functions of property acquisition, disposition and ongoing lease structuring, but also supports our strategic vision and main objective of creating value for our investors."

About Griffin Capital Essential Asset REIT

Griffin Capital Essential Asset REIT, Inc., is a self-managed, publicly registered, non-listed Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT) that reports its Net Asset Value (NAV) daily. Its portfolio of net-lease assets consists of single-tenant, business essential properties throughout the United States, diversified by corporate credit, physical geography, product type, and lease duration. As of September 30, 2019, Griffin Capital Essential Asset REIT owns 101 properties located in 25 states totaling 27.2 million in rentable square feet, representing a total REIT capitalization of $4.7 billion. Griffin Capital Securities, LLC, Member FINRA/SIPC, is the dealer manager for Griffin Capital Essential Asset REIT.

Additional information is available at www.gcear.com.

This press release may contain certain forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended. Such forward-looking statements can generally be identified by our use of forward-looking terminology such as "may," "will," "expect," "intend," "anticipate," "estimate," "believe," "continue," or other similar words. Because such statements include risks, uncertainties and contingencies, actual results may differ materially from the expectations, intentions, beliefs, plans or predictions of the future expressed or implied by such forward-looking statements. These risks, uncertainties and contingencies include, but are not limited to: uncertainties relating to changes in general economic and real estate conditions; uncertainties relating to the implementation of our real estate investment strategy; uncertainties relating to financing availability and capital proceeds; uncertainties relating to the closing of property acquisitions; uncertainties related to the timing and availability of distributions; and other risk factors as outlined in the REIT's Annual Report on Form 10-K and Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q as filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC"). This is neither an offer nor a solicitation to purchase securities.

There is currently no public trading market for shares of our common stock and there may never be one, so redemption of shares by us will likely be the only way to dispose of your shares. The purchase and redemption price for shares of our common stock is based on the NAV of each class of common stock and is not based on any public trading market. Our NAV does not currently represent our enterprise value and may not accurately reflect the actual prices at which our assets could be liquidated on any given day, the value a third party would pay for all or substantially all of our shares, or the price that our shares would trade at on a national stock exchange. Furthermore, our board of directors may amend our NAV procedures from time to time. Our share redemption program generally imposes a quarterly cap on aggregate redemptions of our shares equal to a value of up to 5% of the aggregate NAV of the outstanding shares as of the last business day of the previous quarter. We may also amend, suspend or terminate our share redemption program at any time. A portion of the proceeds received in our offerings may be used to redeem or repurchase our shares, which will reduce the net proceeds available to acquire additional properties. We may pay distributions from sources other than our cash flows from operations, including from the net investment proceeds from our public offerings, and as a result, we would have less cash available for investments and your overall return may be reduced. Our future results will suffer if we do not effectively manage our expanded operations that occurred as a result of the mergers. We may incur substantial debt, which could hinder our ability to pay distributions to our shareholders or could decrease the value of your investment, and our board of directors may authorize us to exceed our charter limit on leverage of 300% of net assets. If we fail to maintain our status as a Real Estate Investment Trust ("REIT"), it could adversely affect our operations and our ability to make distributions. We have incurred net losses in the past and may incur net losses in the future, and we have an accumulated deficit and may continue to do so in the future. Adverse economic conditions may negatively affect our property values, returns and profitability. If we breach covenants under our credit agreement, we could be held in default under such agreement, which could accelerate our repayment date and materially adversely affect the value of our shareholders' investment in us.

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