

As we've come to find over the past year, many of these products from China, whether children's toys or drywall, lack the oversight and inspection process that is essential to ensure the safety of consumers. Specifically, these homeowners in the Hampton Roads region have experienced corrosion of copper piping, the advanced deterioration of appliances, and even electrical wiring. One homeowner asked me to smell her jacket, and sure enough the smell of sulfur was readily apparent from the Chinese drywall. This is what these folks are subjected to on a daily basis.

These are citizens who have been caught in between a lapse in oversight by Chinese manufacturers and market forces looking to shore up lacking supplies. In the process, they have lost their dream homes, developed health problems, and many have lost everything inside of their homes that they have worked for their entire lives.

This is an issue which isn't just affecting homeowners in Hampton Roads, but across the country. Customs officials are already on the lookout at our ports to stop the flow of any additional Chinese drywall to the U.S. However, only 1% of the containers coming in are actually subjected to inspections.

We must take actions not only to adequately monitor all of the materials entering our country, but to help the families with Chinese drywall already in their homes. These are teachers, police officers, servicemen and women who have all lost their pursuit of the American dream. We owe it to them and others who may be affected in the future, to fix this issue. I look forward to touring some of these homes to see the drywall first-hand. If you or your family is affected by this problem, please contact one of my offices and we will do everything we can to help you.

*Congressman Rob Wittman represents the First District of Virginia. He was elected to his first full term in November 2008 and serves on the Natural Resources Committee and the Armed Services Committee where he is the Ranking Member of the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee.*