

On Tuesday, I had the opportunity to speak to the 2010 Virginia Coastal Partners Workshop, with State Natural Resources Secretary Doug Domenech. I was pleased to join these great folks in kicking off the workshop focusing on an important issue to America's First District and to Virginia. The First District is historically, economically and culturally closely tied to the water. Our region faces several challenges but also many great opportunities. Governor McDonnell and Secretary Domenech have taken important steps to safeguard the Commonwealth's natural resources, such as the Chesapeake Bay, while at the same time encouraging economic growth. Natural resources are important to Virginia's history as well as our economy and the Bay will remain a priority of mine as we look towards the 112th Congress.

Also this week, I was humbled and honored to accept the position to serve as Chairman of the United States Naval Academy (USNA) Board of Visitors for the upcoming year. The First District of Virginia has a significant concentration of Naval Academy alumni, with many active Navy and Marine Corps officers serving in the Hampton Roads and Quantico areas, and also other Naval commands in the surrounding area. Thousands of midshipmen receive an extraordinary education and train to serve our country at the Naval Academy. We are privileged to have 46 First District midshipmen currently at the Academy. The USNA is one of the finest military institutions in the world, and I look forward to being more involved in ensuring the traditions of excellent training and education remain at the highest levels of effort and integrity.

A delicate but pressing issue with our military men and women and veterans is the mismanagement of Arlington Cemetery. This week I cosponsored legislation enforcing new standards to better identify and code remains at Arlington National Cemetery. Earlier in the year, [I questioned Army Secretary John McHugh](#) about the report of mismanagement at the cemetery, and know that the Army has promised to do everything they can to correct the completely unacceptable administration of the cemetery. But I believe that we must also bring larger changes in law to ensure accountability in order to avoid these problems in the future. We simply cannot tolerate mismanagement of this magnitude, and I encourage you to read more about this legislation [on my website](#) . Without question, Arlington must remain a flawless symbol of American heroism, honor, and sacrifice.

Many of you joined my listening session and discussion this week, which was a great opportunity to hear your thoughts and opinions on some of the current issues facing Virginia and our country. While we discussed many issues of the day, the overwhelming issues were job creation and government spending. Many of you spoke on your concerns regarding the tax cuts set to expire in January. We heard the news that a deal had been reached on taxes, however, Congress has yet to consider any measure to prevent the looming tax hike coming on January 1. With unemployment shifting even higher this past month, the last thing our economy needs is

additional burdens placed on families and small businesses. And as we begin the 112th Congress, some of the first priorities will be to rein in spending, stop the uncontrolled growth in government and cut out waste, fraud and abuse in the federal budget. If you did not have the chance to join us, please share your thoughts with me by phone (202) 225-4261 or by email on my website (

<http://wittman.house.gov>

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Congressman Rob Wittman represents the First District of Virginia. He serves on the Natural Resources Committee and the Armed Services Committee where he is the Ranking Member of the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee.