

Last week we heard from officials at Arlington National Cemetery about the reforms happening at Arlington after the egregious stories of mismanagement of records and burial grounds. Arlington Cemetery is a special place for many reasons, but for me it's special because it's where generations of heroes have been laid to rest. It's a place where we can go and pay tribute to heroes who dedicated their lives to others and answered our nation's call to duty despite the sacrifices associated with doing so. Earlier this year, I held a hearing on this same issue and was pleased to hear of progress at Arlington. I joined with Congressman Joe Wilson to host this joint hearing. Officials updated us about the efforts of the Old Guard, who took thousands of photos during the dark of night for two months to account for every single gravesite at Arlington. Because of their tireless work, we now have an accurate count of gravesites and markers at Arlington which will ensure that future plans are based on real facts and data, not guesses and out-of-date records. This was an important service for our nation. The remarkable precision and diligence of the Old Guard is exactly what must be used to implement new systems and processes at Arlington. In particular, I was happy to learn that the Army's Inspector General didn't identify any "deficiencies" during the most recent inspection. And I'm happy to know that the Army has dedicated the manpower and resources to hopefully sustain this progress moving forward. The importance of accountability and oversight of Arlington cannot be understated. The recent progress that's been made on a number of issues was necessary, but there is more work to be done and I will continue to monitor this issue. Our veterans and service members deserve nothing less.

On the House floor this past week was legislation to keep the federal government running as we approach the end of the fiscal year on September 30. One of the largest weights holding our economy down is uncertainty caused by government. I believe we must not allow the government to shut down, but I am disappointed in the broken process and an inability to make the tough decisions in Washington, DC. This legislation represents a 1.5% cut from fiscal year 2011 and a cut of \$46 billion from the last fiscal year (2010) spending levels. With passage of a one-week measure, this debate will continue as I return to Washington, DC, in early October.

Please continue to interact with your thoughts as the debates on important issues continue. Your input is important, so thank you! Contact me on the web: www.wittman.house.gov or by phone at [202-225-4261](tel:202-225-4261)

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

