(WASHINGTON, DC) - Congressman Rob Wittman issued the following statement regarding the departure of the 77th ship from the James River Reserve Fleet (JRRF):

"I am thrilled that yet another ship has been removed from the James River Reserve Fleet. Salvaging these ships continues to drive local business and improve our Chesapeake Bay environment," said Wittman.

The most recent ship to leave is The Kalamazoo, which will be recycled at the Esco Marine facility in Brownsville, Texas. Currently, only 26 removable vessels remain in the JRRF.

Wittman's predecessor, Jo Ann Davis, was the first to secure money for removing ships the James River Fleet. This year, Congressman Wittman requested $17 million for the Maritime Administration ship scrapping program for FY09 and continues to work to ensure that the project receives funding.