

Washington, DC – Congressman Rob Wittman (VA-01) made the following statement today after the House returned to Washington, DC, from its normal August District Work Period to vote on legislation funding additional bailout programs for states:

“Unfortunately, this is another example of Washington throwing money at a problem instead of implementing real reforms to inject life into our economy,” said Wittman. “With this additional \$26 billion in ‘temporary relief’ today, Congress simply continues its unchecked spending spree on the taxpayer dime while adding to the deficit, and ignoring the larger problems facing families, communities, our Commonwealth and our nation.”

The bill, which passed the House today by a vote of 247-161, contains a total of \$26.1 billion in temporary state bailouts funded by permanent tax increases, deficit spending from the “stimulus” and reductions in highway funding and Department of Defense funding.

The bill provides \$10 billion for a state education fund that can only be used to pay teacher salaries, yet under this legislation, states still may not receive funding until October or November, months after staffing decisions have already been made. In order to receive the education money, states would be prohibited from reducing their education budgets below 2009 levels and the federal money could not be used to reduce the state’s debt. Thus, the bill not only shields states from making tough budget choices, it prohibits them from doing so. Furthermore, the bill would extend what was a “temporary” increase in the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) funded by the stimulus for an additional six months, through June 30, 2011.

Wittman continued, “Congress should instead focus an emergency session to give real relief to our economy by enacting permanent tax relief, to eliminate uncertainty and get investment dollars off the sidelines into the economy to help create jobs.”

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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.