

WASHINGTON, DC – Today the U.S. House of Representatives passed a measure authored by Congressman Rob Wittman (VA-1), the *Chesapeake Bay Accountability and Recovery Act* (H.R. 258), as part of a larger conservation package, H.R. 2578, the *Conservation and Economic Growth Act*. Wittman introduced H.R. 258 last year, to continue his efforts to fundamentally alter the management of Chesapeake Bay restoration activities.

“Today is a proud moment for Virginia’s First District as the House passes legislation to aid in the clean-up of one of our prized historic resources, the Chesapeake Bay,” Wittman said. “This body of water provides for habitat for plants, fish and animals. These are the resources that drive local economies, recreation, and the way of life for so many that live on and around its shores.”

Wittman's legislation would fully implement two cutting edge management techniques, crosscut budgeting and adaptive management, to enhance coordination, flexibility and efficiency of restoration efforts. These techniques have been used successfully in the Everglades and the Great Lakes; however, they have not been fully implemented in Bay restoration efforts, where results have lagged far behind the billions of dollars spent. Additionally, the legislation would create a Chesapeake Bay Program Independent Evaluator to review and report to Congress on restoration activities in the watershed. The Chesapeake Bay partnership includes 10 federal agencies, six states and the District of Columbia, over one thousand localities and multiple non-governmental organizations. To date, the complexity of the participants has resulted in a muddled effort. In drafting this legislation, Congressman Wittman drew heavily on his 23 years of experience as a shellfish specialist monitoring water quality and environmental health issues in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

“Since coming to Congress, the restoration of the Bay has been one of my highest priorities. Currently, multiple agencies and groups share concerns about the Bay, but are not adequately working together. This bill brings them together,” Wittman continued.

The Chesapeake Bay Accountability and Recovery Act of 2009 passed the House in the fall of 2009, but was not taken up by the Senate. Companion legislation was introduced in the Senate in 2011 by Virginia Senators Mark Warner and Jim Webb.

U.S. House Passes Wittman Chesapeake Bay Clean-up Measure

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Last year, Wittman co-founded the Congressional Chesapeake Bay Watershed Caucus, which brings together members from the Chesapeake Bay watershed region to discuss issues related to the Bay and Bay clean-up.

Watch Wittman's remarks on the House floor here: <http://youtu.be/5j6epU5EO5s> .

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.