

Legislation endorsed by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, the Choose Clean Water Coalition, and the Virginia Seafood Council **WASHINGTON, DC** – Congressman Rob Wittman (VA-1) today introduced one of his signature pieces of legislation, the Chesapeake Bay Accountability and Recovery Act. As a leader on Bay issues in Congress and Co-Chair of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Caucus, Wittman continues to advocate for improvements in the management of resources for restoration of the Chesapeake Bay.

“The Chesapeake Bay is an integral part of America’s First District, historically, economically, and even culturally,” Wittman said. “In addition to generating billions of dollars in economic activity, the Bay provides tens of thousands of jobs in the commercial seafood and recreational fishing industries alone. At the same time, the Bay is a fundamental part of our region’s ecosystem. Since coming to Congress, the restoration of this national treasure has been one of my highest priorities. Many folks across all levels of government and numerous organizations share my concerns about the Bay, but are not adequately working together. This bill will address that problem. During the last two sessions of Congress, we have made important steps by passing this legislation in the House, and it is my hope we can do so again, and then focus on passage in the Senate. The Chesapeake Bay is a cultural and economic beacon, and I will continue to push for its restoration and for the federal government to do its part to protect and restore the Bay for now and for future generations.”

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.

Wittman’s legislation has received endorsements from the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, the Choose Clean Water Coalition, and the Virginia Seafood Council:

Virginia Seafood Council: "The Virginia Seafood Council strongly supports Congressman Wittman's Chesapeake Bay Accountability and Recovery Act that will implement Bay restoration

programs that have proven to be effective as well as provide a conduit to ensure accountability among agencies that are tasked with Bay restoration activities."

Chesapeake Bay Foundation: "Congressman Wittman has long been a champion of the Chesapeake, and we look forward to working with him to pass this and other legislation important to Bay restoration."

Congressman Rob Wittman represents the First District of Virginia. He serves on the House Natural Resources Committee, the Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife, Oceans and Insular Affairs, and the Subcommittee on Energy and Minerals Resources.

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