

ROBERT J. WITTMAN
1ST DISTRICT, VIRGINIA



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SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE COMPETITION
BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE
CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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February 18, 2026

Executive Office of the Mayor
1350 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Mayor Bowser,

I write to you regarding the recent DC Water Potomac Interceptor (PI) failure, which has been named the largest wastewater spill in U.S. history. As you know, the Potomac River flows downstream into the Chesapeake Bay — meaning this spill has the potential to jeopardize the water quality and health of the ecosystem beyond the boundaries of the Potomac River.

The downstream effects of this wastewater reaching the Chesapeake Bay could be devastating on regional ecosystems and shellfish operations. The Bay is not only an economic engine, but integral to our way of life in the Commonwealth. The Chesapeake Bay is more than a national treasure — it drives Virginia's economy, creates countless jobs, sustains family farms and supports fisheries and local businesses. As co-chair of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Task Force, I have championed programs and legislation aimed at enhancing water quality in the area.

Emergency preparedness and environmental remediation is a critical service that we must provide for the people of Greater Washington. I have seen firsthand how critical it is for the federal government to work in close coordination with its state partners, especially when it comes to the safety of American citizens.

In light of these recent developments, I want to ask your administration the following questions:

1. What measures has DC Water taken to stabilize the Potomac Interceptor?
2. What environmental remediation steps are planned to ensure any water quality issues will be fully mitigated downstream?
3. What federal agencies have been notified or are actively involved in remediation efforts?

In Congress, I've made it a top priority to ensure the health of our environment so that it can be enjoyed by future generations. I want you to know that I am monitoring the situation and will continue to advocate for the health of Virginia's vast natural resources. It is important that we work together to mitigate the impacts of this sewage spill on the Bay.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robert J. Wittman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Robert J. Wittman
Member of Congress