

A natural disaster is something no one wants to see but something for which everyone must prepare. In the past week, our area has experienced an earthquake and a hurricane. Each event by itself can be overwhelming, but with both we have been reminded of what is truly important: the safety of our family and friends. Unfortunately, Hurricane Irene did not leave our area unscathed and we pray for those families who lost a loved one as a result of the storm.

On Saturday morning, I took time to visit the York County Emergency Operations Center, to talk with first responders there as we watched Hurricane Irene arrive in Virginia. They were focused on those who needed assistance as conditions deteriorated in our area. I also had a chance to visit Tabb High School, which hosted one of the emergency shelters to house folks who needed to evacuate.

Following the storm, I joined many of those in Montross, grabbing my chainsaw to help clear debris from roads and yards. Many families came together to help neighbors who needed assistance. As we deal with disaster, we see the goodness of so many with neighbors helping neighbors, first responders and local workers coming together to help with clean-up and ensuring our neighborhoods are safe.

On Monday, I joined with Governor Bob McDonnell in an aerial tour of the greater Richmond area and Hampton Roads to view the damage brought by Hurricane Irene. We were able to assess much of the damage caused to our area, and talk with many local officials on what is needed to return the areas back to normal. I look forward to working with state and local officials to ensure we restore our communities following this storm.

If you have questions about recovery from the storm, or feedback to share, please do not hesitate to contact me through email on my website, www.wittman.house.gov, or by phone at 202-225-4261. It is my hope that your family stays safe as Virginia and the Northeast region continues to recover from Hurricane Irene.

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.