

With the August District Work Period coming to a close, I have truly valued this time because it has given me the opportunity to meet with so many of you in America's First District, both individually and as part of larger town hall meetings. With skyrocketing debts and no balanced budget yet to speak of, Washington has shown repeatedly that it cannot spend taxpayers' money responsibly. During several town hall meetings I conducted during this past week, many folks made it clear to me that they simply don't trust Washington with their hard earned dollars, and I can say that I adamantly agree and share their frustration.

Monday found us in Fredericksburg at Chancellor's Village, visiting with a large group of seniors and other citizens who came to discuss the important issues facing our country. Many seniors expressed fears about losing their Medicare coverage, and I assured them of my unwavering support for preserving benefits for those 55 and older, as well as my dedication to strengthening the system for future beneficiaries. Our discussion also touched on the recent debt ceiling debate in Washington and the serious need for Congress to cut spending, as well as the role of military retirement spending in future debates. I also welcomed folks to the discussion who may disagree with me on the issues, but I respect their views, and I'm glad we got to have a civil conversation.

Folks expressed many of the same concerns during a telephone town hall event on Tuesday evening and during an in-person discussion at the Yorktown Senior Center on Wednesday afternoon. Some participants mentioned the debt burden that their children and grandchildren will have to bear, and others expressed fears that the federal government will suffer a further downgrade in its credit rating if Congress doesn't tackle our growing debt problem. Others discussed their disagreement with inconsistent immigration policies, and several folks praised Chesapeake Bay restoration efforts. These issues are all very significant, and I appreciate the willingness of so many folks to voice their concerns in a public forum.

Toward the end of our town hall meeting in Yorktown, one participant commented that he had enjoyed the discussion and wished it "didn't have to end so soon." In a way, that's how I feel about these productive periods in which I am able to spend so much time meeting with folks, as it has been truly beneficial for me to be able to hear so many of your thoughts and concerns. The consistent theme I've noticed when conducting town hall discussions, having individual meetings, and even just when talking with others in line at the grocery store is that folks are frustrated with Washington. This frustration, at least, shows that folks are alert and engaged with what's going on in their government. This participation is vital as our nation faces such challenging issues.

And like the gentleman at our town hall event in Yorktown, I am always saddened when a productive period of discussion has to end. However, it's time Congress rolls up their sleeves and gets back to work. I am hopeful that as I return to Washington with your thoughts, concerns, and insights in mind, we can work together to change the way Congress operates. I thank all of you who participated in our discussions this week, and I encourage you all to continue to reach out to me by telephone ([202-225-4261](tel:202-225-4261)) or online at [wittman.house.gov](http://wittman.house.gov) so that we may continue having this helpful dialogue.

*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.*