

No votes were scheduled in the House of Representatives during the week of February 20, so I packed my schedule traveling around America's First District, meeting with fellow Virginians and discussing how the federal government affects them. Seeing the great folks in Virginia's First District in action at their places of work or serving their communities is a valuable reminder of how what Washington does or does not do affects everyday life back home. I remain committed to supporting policies that will preserve the jobs that are already out there while at the same time helping to facilitate an environment of job creation so that our citizens can get back to work.

I greatly enjoyed getting to see firsthand the hard work by the folks at the United Grinding plant in Spotsylvania. On Wednesday, the plant celebrated its 30th anniversary at this location. This event provided a great opportunity to visit with employees and customers and to tour the recently renovated facility. The First District is home to a wide variety of businesses and it is important that the government not hamper the efforts of organizations like United Grinding so they can produce their products and provide jobs for hardworking citizens. At the same time, Washington has to ensure that it does not hinder the actions of service-related organizations such as the Rappahannock United Way, which celebrated its 2011 Campaign on Wednesday. It was great to see so many local groups and businesses gathering to promote selfless acts of charity. The Rappahannock United Way raised over \$3.5 million in 2011, and many charitable organizations will benefit from the generosity shown by so many folks in the Fredericksburg area. I appreciated the opportunity this week to speak with the dedicated citizens at both United Grinding and the Rappahannock United Way, as well as many other organizations, and to hear their thoughts on the various issues facing their charities, businesses, and families.

Another great part of the Constituent Work Week was being able to meet with my First District Health Care Advisory Council on Thursday. During my time in Congress, these dedicated folks have provided me with constructive feedback and innovative ideas about how to reduce the costs and increase the quality of health care for Americans. The members of the Council have extensive experience in the healthcare industry as doctors, nurses, administrators, and patients, and their collective knowledge has been extremely helpful to me as I've considered the various bills in Congress dealing with health care reform over the past several years. Health care costs in this country are continuing to rise, and it is critical that we address this in a responsible, targeted way that truly reduces the burden of health care expenses on our citizens.

I'd like to thank the various organizations who welcomed me this week and all of the individuals who came into my district offices for meetings. As always, your input is truly invaluable. As Congress has now come back into session, I encourage you all to continue to keep in touch with me over the phone at (202) 225-4261, through my website at (www.wittman.house.gov), via Facebook (www.facebook.com/RobWittman), or on Twitter (www.twitter.com/RepRobWittman).

