

**WASHINGTON, DC** – As the year progresses, it is critical that the actions and legislation coming out of Washington not hinder the efforts of small businesses to innovate and create jobs. Over the last few years, there have been a number of policies coming out of Washington that greatly concern me and that have resulted in negative impacts for consumers, businesses, and to our economic recovery. In hearing constituents' concerns, the president's 2010 health care overhaul tops the list. Obamacare, which I voted against in 2010, has numerous harmful provisions that drive up health care costs, and undercut the medical care that patients receive. On January 1, 2013, an Obamacare tax provision is set to take effect that creates a new tax on medical devices and equipment. This medical device tax potentially reduces the quality of health care for many Americans and reduces jobs in the medical device and equipment industry at a time when folks are struggling to find jobs. Last week, I was proud to vote for a bill (H.R. 436) that prevents this burdensome new tax from taking effect.

While there is no doubt that the health care system in this country needs reform, the health care overhaul passed in 2010 simply muddied the waters by allowing government to intrude in the patient-doctor relationship, while not addressing ways to reduce the actual costs of receiving and providing medical care. According to the Congressional Budget Office, federal spending on health care will increase from 5.4% of GDP now to 10.7% of GDP in 2037. The tax provision addressed this week is yet another example of government overreach that will negatively impact health care on many levels. Obamacare established a 2.3 percent tax on all types of medical devices, affecting a growth industry in the U.S. that employs hundreds of thousands of hardworking citizens. By imposing this burdensome new tax on medical device companies, the government is hindering the private sector's ability to produce the highest quality health care products, which in turn limits a company to expand its business and hire new folks. At the same time, American excellence in scientific medical technology is well-known around the world, and there is no doubt that many foreign nations are determined to surpass us. This new tax would put a significant part of our scientific infrastructure at a disadvantage, which could allow the rest of the world to out-research and out-develop us. I was proud to support the Health Care Cost Reduction Act on Thursday, which eliminates this tax to ensure that American companies can continue to innovate and retain employees, and patients can continue to receive affordable medical care with the finest technology in the world. This legislation passed in a bipartisan vote of 270-146, and I hope the Senate will follow suit.

Even though I view the Health Care Cost Reduction Act's passage as a success, I still believe that it is necessary for the entirety of President Obama's health reform package to be repealed, and I have supported efforts to do just that (H.R. 2). I've also voted for multiple bills to eliminate and roll back various parts of Obamacare (H.R. 4, H.R. 5, H.R. 1286), because I believe there are better ways to reform health care. June will of course be a pivotal time, as the Supreme Court will issue its historic opinion on the law's constitutionality. However, no matter what happens, I believe it is critical that folks in Washington work together to pursue common-sense

solutions to reform our health care system, including allowing youth up to the age of 26 to stay on their parents' insurance plans, permitting the sale of insurance across state lines, and ensuring coverage for those with preexisting conditions, among other practical reforms. At the heart of any reform effort must be the goal of reducing the overall cost of health care for folks, while also making sure that medical decisions remain personal, namely, between patients and their doctors.

In order to spur our economic recovery, government should be facilitating an environment where U.S. companies can remain competitive and the private sector can pursue innovative and cutting-edge solutions and ideas. Like many in the country, I eagerly await the decision of the Supreme Court, and their ruling on Obamacare's constitutionality. But regardless of the verdict, I believe that the House of Representatives should be prepared to immediately react with common-sense, rational reforms that we can all agree on to help reduce the cost of receiving health care. Please let me know the types of reforms you'd like to see put in place. I can be reached via email on my website ( [www.wittman.house.gov](http://www.wittman.house.gov) ), by phone (202-225-4261), through Twitter ( [www.twitter.com/obwittman](https://twitter.com/obwittman) ) and via Facebook ( <http://www.facebook.com/reprobwittman> ).

*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.*