

(WASHINGTON, DC) - Congressman Rob Wittman announced the award of a \$1.045 million grant for the Fredericksburg Rail Station and \$497,000 for the purchase of two new commuter buses for the Potomac & Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC).

The rail station currently serves 1,300 passengers boarding daily, while the PRTC OmniRide bus service has experienced a 15.9% increase in ridership from February to June 2008 due to an increased demand for alternative transit.

“With the continuing rise in gas and transportation costs, we must do everything in our power to continue to provide safe and readily available alternatives for commuters in the First District,” said Wittman.

These funds are distributed through the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration and the Office of the Secretary of Transportation. The grant for the Fredericksburg Rail Station, which is used by Virginia Railway Express (VRE) and Amtrak, will be matched with \$380,224 in funds from the Commonwealth of Virginia to provide the engineering and design of future renovations for the station. The later renovation will include repairs to the bottom of the platform slabs, CSX track slab, abutments, ramps, and pier substructures.

Additionally, the grant for two new commuter buses to be used by OmniRide will alleviate overcrowding on the buses in Prince William County, which has resulted in the addition of seven trips to current routes. There are an additional ten trips which also meet the overcrowding threshold, but will not begin to see relief until the additional buses arrive. Local matching grants of \$238,000 and \$259,000 for the new buses will be provided by the Commonwealth of Virginia and by the Potomac & Rappahannock Transportation Commission.

Congressman Rob Wittman represents the First District of Virginia. He was elected to replace the late Rep. Jo Ann Davis in a special election last December.