

(WASHINGTON, DC) - Congressman Rob Wittman issued the following statement regarding Secretary Gutierrez' declaration of a fishery resource disaster in the Chesapeake Bay:

"I am glad that Secretary Gutierrez has agreed with our assessment that the current state of the Chesapeake Bay blue crabs is a resources disaster. The precipitous drop in the blue crab population has created an incredible hardship for our watermen and represents a troubling trend in the overall state of the Bay," said Wittman.

"With this designation, Congress can now become involved in appropriating necessary disaster related funds. I am submitting a request to Congressional Leadership asking that they include the requisite funding in legislation that will be considered this week," said Wittman.

"Today's designation is an essential step on the road to recovery for crabbers and other small businesses that make their livelihoods on the Chesapeake. It is also a necessary step in restoring the blue crab populations of the Chesapeake," said Wittman.