(WASHINGTON, DC) - Congressman Rob Wittman issued the follow statement regarding the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) announcement of $20 million in economic assistance for the Chesapeake Bay blue crab disaster.

"I am pleased to announce that NOAA has released $20 million to Virginia and Maryland to assist watermen and restore the blue crab fishery in the Bay. I want to thank Governor Kaine and Commerce Secretary Gutierrez for approving my request for assistance for Virginia's waterman, which paved the way for the release of this funding. These funds will assist watermen and create programs to improve habitat and bring back the blue crab," said Wittman. According to NOAA, ten million dollars will be made available to each state, which will now submit plans to NOAA on how the funds would be allocated.

As a Member of the House Committee on Natural Resources, Rep. Wittman worked with Governor Tim Kaine and the Virginia Congressional Delegation to advocate for a disaster declaration and to provide funding to restore the blue crab fishery.