

(Washington, D.C.) - Congressman Rob Wittman (R-VA) released the following statement on the state of the Chesapeake Bay and offering his support to the Virginia Watermen's Association:

"The Commonwealth of Virginia is blessed with some of the most pristine natural beauty in world. Many local economies depend on the revenues created by tourists ascending upon Virginia in hope of enjoying our waters, beaches, mountains and forests. The Chesapeake Bay has long provided numerous opportunities for locals and tourists alike to fish, boat and enjoy a day at the beach. Unfortunately, over the years we have failed to adequately protect and preserve the Bay and as a result its health has declined to the point of being in critical condition.

"The Virginia Watermen's Association, an organization with many members who earn a living working the Bay, has chosen to stand in opposition to the current condition of the Bay. They correctly point out that a lack of action has been ruinous on local small businesses and their employees within the seafood industry. I agree with the Watermen and share their concern that this is a problem that demands we take serious and decisive action to clean up the Bay.

"That is why I have been working with my colleagues in Congress to draft legislation that provides a comprehensive plan to clean up the Bay. Currently, there are several piecemeal efforts going on simultaneously, but unless these efforts are strategically coordinated, they will not be successful. I am in the process of meeting with agencies and organizations who are involved in Bay clean-up to get their points of view as I draft the legislation.

As a Member of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Task Force, I will continue to support efforts to improve the health of one of our most valuable resources."