**Washington, DC** – Congressman Rob Wittman (VA-1) made the following statement today following the Administration's announcement canceling the offshore lease sale off the coast of Virginia:

"My visit to the Gulf, and this week's Natural Resources Committee hearings have made clear to me that the federal government must focus 100% on stopping the Gulf oil spill and cleaning up the impacted coastlines. It is increasingly frustrating that 38 days into this crisis, industry and the federal government have not been able to stop the spill.

"The President's announcement today to significantly curtail further offshore energy production, including canceling a planned lease sale off the coast of Virginia, while well intentioned may set a precedent that weakens our national security and increases our reliance on imported foreign energy.

"It is appropriate to carefully review and ensure that offshore energy production is appropriately regulated and conducted in a safe and environmentally sensitive manner. However, it is also critical that we promote responsible American made energy, including oil, natural gas, nuclear, coal, and renewable energy."

*Congressman Rob Wittman represents the First District of Virginia. He serves on the Natural Resources Committee and the Armed Services Committee where he is the Ranking Member of the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee.*