

Washington, DC - Congressman Rob Wittman (VA-01) released the following statement after Defense Secretary Robert Gates proposed the closure of United States Joint Forces Command:

"I have deep concerns about the strategic implications of Secretary Gates' decision to close Joint Forces Command (JFCOM). Until I am convinced that it is the right decision for our national security, I cannot support the closure of this Command. One of the greatest successes of the U.S. military – unlike any other in the world – is its ability to function jointly, and this decision could hinder the tremendous progress we've made. "

"I question why a change in structure of this magnitude was not included in the Quadrennial Defense Review. This is just one more example of budgetary pressures, rather than strategic need, driving defense decisions. In this announcement, the Executive Branch has clearly side-stepped the Legislative Branch without deliberation on the way forward with what's best with our nation's defense policy. I look forward to working with my colleagues on the Armed Services Committee to conduct oversight and execute our funding authority to the fullest extent. Furthermore, I look forward to hearing from Secretary Gates how the current, critical missions of JFCOM, such as joint training efforts, will be carried out under this new plan."

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*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.*