

**Washington, DC** – Congressman Rob Wittman (VA-1) today voted to support the final passage of the Telework Improvements Act of 2010. This legislation advances the use of telework by Federal agencies, ensuring each agency implements a telework policy, determines employee eligibility to telework, and informs employees about their eligibility. H.R. 1722 first passed the U.S. House of Representatives in July 2010 with Wittman's support, and the final bill passed today will be sent to the President for his signature. The legislation passed by a vote of 254 to 152.

"I am proud to support this legislation, which will foster the use of telework by Federal agencies, resulting in cost savings and improved readiness and emergency preparedness, in addition to alleviating traffic congestion," Wittman said. "This bill is a win for Virginians, especially in areas facing severe traffic congestion every day. America's First District is home to thousands of Federal employees; many of whom face long commutes each day. And every citizen who gets behind the wheel in Virginia is more than aware we need to get cars off the road to ease commuter travel times. Telework is a great technological solution to alleviating traffic congestion, but also provides a critical solution to ensure continuity of operations in case of a national emergency or weather events such as the 2010 winter storms that brought the Federal government to a halt last winter. This bill also provides certainty to employees who are eligible to telework, to have the ability and accessible facilities to accommodate them."

The legislation requires each executive agency to establish a telework policy under which employees would be authorized to telework to the maximum extent possible without diminished employee performance or agency operations. The bill would permit employees to telework at least 20 percent of the hours worked in every two administrative workweeks.

Under the bill, the head of each agency must designate a Telework Managing Officer and each agency must ensure that no distinction is made between employees who telework and those who do not for performance appraisals, training and other purposes. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) would issue regulations and guidance to agencies to implement telework programs, and OPM and the Government Accountability Office (GAO) would be required to

evaluate and report on agency telework programs.

After taking into account the 30% of federal workers found to have been teleworking during this winter's week-long snow storm, the Office of Personnel Management downgraded its initial estimate that the government lost \$100 million worth of productivity each day it remained closed to a projected loss of \$71 million for each day during the closure.

Earlier this year, Wittman introduced H.R. 4348, the Telework Tax Incentive Act, which would provide eligible taxpayers with an annual tax credit for qualified teleworking expenses paid or incurred by the taxpayer that year, up to \$1,000. Employees working in a teleworking arrangement where the employee works at least 75 days per year would be eligible to receive the tax credit. Wittman also successfully included language in the House version of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2010 which directs the Secretary of Defense, in coordination with the Office of Personnel Management and the General Services Administration, to assess sites within the Washington Metropolitan Area in order to identify at least two sites for a possible pilot program to provide secure teleworking for Federal employees.

Link to Wittman Floor Speech: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OrCj4BnGXo4> .

*Congressman Rob Wittman represents the First District of Virginia. He was re-elected to his second full term in November 2010 and serves on the Natural Resources Committee and the Armed Services Committee where he is the Ranking Member of the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee.*

