

Still not satisfied with Army's handling of our nation's most hallowed ground

Washington, DC – Congressman Rob Wittman (VA-1) today led a hearing in the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, receiving testimony from a retired Air Force Colonel whose wife's burial was affected by the mismanagement at Arlington National Cemetery, and Army officials on accountability at the cemetery, some of the nation's most hallowed grounds.

"I am angry that our nation's heroes, like Colonel Bill Koch, who have suffered the loss of a loved one, have had to go through the stress and additional grief associated with this scandal," Wittman said. "These errors and lack of accountability show a blatant lack of respect for those fallen heroes and their spouses laid to rest on these hallowed grounds. It is simply unacceptable that we have not closed out some of the most basic issues such as record digitization which in turn prevents us from moving on, putting this tragedy behind us, and delivering justice to those who have suffered. Furthermore, the Army still does not even have a grasp on the magnitude of discrepancies on the tombs at Arlington. I will not rest until every issue is addressed in a satisfactory manner and every question answered. I am grateful to Colonel Koch for traveling to Washington, DC, today to tell his story."

Retired Air Force Colonel William Koch visited his wife Jean's gravesite at Arlington for four years without knowing it was empty.

Kathryn A. Condon, Executive Director, Army National Cemeteries Program and Mr. Patrick Hallinan, Superintendent at Arlington National Cemetery, and Karl F. Schneider, Principal Deputy to the Assistant Secretary of the Army, also testified before the Subcommittee.

"We will continue to closely scrutinize the progress on accountability issues at Arlington National Cemetery," Wittman said. "I was bitterly disappointed that we still don't have an answer to the question, 'Who is being held accountable for mismanagement of our nation's most hallowed ground?'"

“Colonel Koch stated today that, ‘Unfortunately, there is more than one tomb at Arlington with an unknown soldier in it.’ This is absolutely unacceptable, and I will continue to hold the Army accountable for its unconscionable mismanagement.”

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March 2011 Release: [Wittman: New Reports out of Arlington Cemetery “Unconscionable”](#)

December 2010 Video: [Wittman Speaks on Arlington Cemetery Accountability Legislation](#)

December 2010 Release: [Wittman Presses for House Action on Arlington Cemetery Accountability](#)

June 2010 Video: [Wittman questions Army Secretary John McHugh](#)

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