

## August 11, 2008: Weekly Washington Update

The August District Work Period started off with a bang last week, with dozens of Members of Congress returning to Washington to continue calling for an up or down vote on a comprehensive energy policy. After participating in the beginning of the effort on Friday, I returned to the Capitol on Monday to speak on the House Floor and continue calling for Congress to return to Washington to deal with the energy crisis.

In addition to participating in Monday's effort, I held two telephone town halls discussing energy this week. Town hall participants were polled to see where they stand on energy issues. By an overwhelming margin of 9 to 1, respondents said they want Congress to come back to Washington for a special session on energy. I also toured the Western Refining Company's Yorktown Refinery last week to learn about their business in the First District, which delivers refined products along the east coast by barge, ship and truck.

Also last week, I joined 134 of my colleagues in sending a letter to Speaker Pelosi requesting that the moratoria on oil and gas leasing in the Outer Continental Shelf and on oil shale leasing on federal lands not be renewed and to allow the states to determine the development of energy in areas within 100 miles of their coast. These moratoria are set to expire on October 1st. The letter also notes that, should any legislation extending these moratoria be sent to President Bush's desk, we would encourage the President to veto it.

On Wednesday, I celebrated the departure of the 75th ship from the James River Reserve Fleet. This is a positive development for both the economic development and environmental improvement of Virginia. Thanks to effective partnerships between federal, state and local governments and local businesses, the overall National Defense Reserve Fleet has reduced from a peak size of 2277 ships in 1950 to 190 ships today, and there are only 30 ships left on the disposal list here in the James River Fleet.

To continue our efforts to reduce size of the James River Reserve Fleet, I have requested \$17 million for the Maritime Administration ship scrapping program for FY09. As you may know, Congresswoman Jo Ann Davis was the first to secure money for removing ships from the James River Fleet.

I have several weeks of work ahead in the First District and will be at my offices in Fredericksburg, Yorktown and Tappahannock. I've enjoyed meeting with a lot of folks so far and hope that you'll take the time to drop by one of my offices and say hello. As always, you can reach us at (202) 225-4261 or at <http://wittman.house.gov/> .