

January 14, 2009: Congressman Wittman Statement on Navy Decision to Homeport a Carrier at Mayport

(WASHINGTON, DC) - "I am deeply concerned with the Record of Decision issued by the Secretary of the Navy to create a second East Coast homeport for a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier at Naval Station Mayport. Relocation of an aircraft carrier from Norfolk, VA to Mayport, FL would disrupt families, cause financially irresponsible redundancy in facilities and personnel at a cost of up to one billion dollars, and increase the security demands on our over-burdened fleet.

The Navy's Record of Decision requires dredging, infrastructure and wharf improvements, and construction of nuclear propulsion plant maintenance facilities at Mayport. Over the past five years the Navy has invested over \$400 million to improve and upgrade the infrastructure at Naval Station Norfolk, to include modernization of the aircraft carrier piers.

Economic judgment and national security requirements are not being given the attention they deserve in the midst of the financial and strategic challenges facing our nation today. Before issuing a Record of Decision, the Secretary of the Navy should have considered whether homeporting a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier in Mayport, FL is in the best interest of the Navy and the nation in the midst of today's budget, economic, and strategic realities."