

## April 20, 2009: Congressman Wittman Statement on Increase in Blue Crab Population

Washington, D.C. - "I am cautiously optimistic to hear that the blue crab population in the Chesapeake Bay is coming back. We need to ensure the health of the blue crab population, while at the same time keeping in mind the effects the harvest restrictions have on our watermen," Wittman stated.

"In addition, any long-term recovery of the blue crab ultimately depends on the water quality of the Bay, and that is why I have introduced the Chesapeake Bay Accountability and Recovery Act. This bill would enhance the coordination, flexibility, and efficiency of restoration efforts; and it would enact the same management and budgeting tools that were used to successfully restore the Great Lakes and the Everglades. By improving the water quality of the Bay, we will help not only the blue crab population, but also the oyster and other shellfish vital to Virginia's environment, culture, history, and economy," explained Wittman.

Congressman Wittman spearheaded efforts in Washington resulting in a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) declaration of a fishery disaster for Chesapeake Bay blue crabs. Congress provided \$20 million in assistance to restore the fishery and provide assistance to watermen. Wittman continues to work with NOAA and the Commonwealth of Virginia to ensure a healthy blue crab fishery.

Congressman Rob Wittman represents the First District of Virginia. He was elected to his first full term in November 2008 and serves on the Natural Resources Committee and the Armed Services Committee where he is the Ranking Member of the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee.