



News from the Office of Congressman Rob Wittman

First District, Virginia



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WEEKLY WASHINGTON UPDATE

The First District of Virginia is fortunate to be home to a high number of service personnel. In addition to multiple bases throughout the district, our area is third among all Congressional districts for total veteran residents. Last week, I held a townhall meeting with veterans in the Hampton Roads area to answer questions and seek firsthand input on their concerns.

Chief among our veterans' concerns are the quality and timeliness of care provided at the VA medical facilities throughout the District. Having traveled to nearly every VA hospital in the First District, I am well versed on specific concerns and am working in Congress to increase both accountability and overall service standards. While we have made important gains in the past year, there is still much work to be done.

In the end of September, Congress passed Veterans Administration funding for FY09. This year's legislation contained the largest increase for the Veterans' Health Administration in history – a record \$4 billion, along with \$41 billion to provide medical services. The bill is a step in the right direction towards providing our veterans with top notch health care and a good foundation to build on in the next Congress.

In addition to holding veterans' townhall meetings, I regularly seek input from members of my Veterans Advisory Group, who provide important advice and local perspectives on veteran-related legislation. I also recently met with Admiral (ret) Norb Ryan, the President of the Military Officers Association of America. MOAA is one of the largest veterans' service organizations in the United States. Our conversation focused on how Congress can fulfill its obligations to our service members and various legislative initiatives for the next Congress.

The past week was an important one for our active duty and reserve personnel as well. On Thursday, the President signed the Duncan Hunter National Defense Authorization Act. This year's NDAA contains a 3.9% raise for all grades and prohibits the Department of Defense from increasing Tricare fees for active duty and retired personnel. Additionally, per my amendment, this legislation requires a feasibility study reviewing the Navy's aircraft carrier force structure.

This has been a busy legislative year for both our men and women currently serving and our veterans. If you have any questions about recent legislation that may impact you, please feel free to call my office at (202) 225-4261 or visit my website, <http://wittman.house.gov>.

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