

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM
TOM DAVIS, CHAIRMAN



MEDIA ADVISORY

For Immediate Release
August 17, 2004

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** * * Field Hearing in Hampton, Va. * * **

Government Reform to Study Progress of
Chesapeake Bay, Examine Use of Modeling

What: **Government Reform Committee oversight hearing:**
“A Model of Success? Monitoring, Measuring and Managing
the Health of the Chesapeake Bay”

When: **FRIDAY, AUGUST 20, 2004 at 10:00 A.M.**

Where: **Bay Breeze Community Center**
Fort Monroe
Hampton, Va.

Please Note: Fort Monroe is an active military installation, and guests must show a driver's license and vehicle registration at the main security gate. Please allow enough time to check in with security and arrive at the hearing on time.

The Fort is located off Mellen Street in the City of Hampton. Take Exit 268 from Interstate 64. At end of exit ramp, turn left on Mallory Street. Turn right onto Mellen and proceed over a small bridge to the main gate of Fort Monroe.

Background: The Government Reform Committee is convening this field hearing in Hampton, Virginia, to help determine whether or not the Chesapeake Bay Program and its partners are using the best methods to measure and report progress in protecting and improving the health of the Bay.

The largest estuary in the United States, the Chesapeake Bay is a vital part of the culture and economy of the region – but it is under ongoing threat from pollution associated with the region's population growth. Of particular concern is the low level of dissolved oxygen in the Bay's water, which affects the health of aquatic life.

A major challenge in improving the health of the Bay is: How can progress be accurately measured? Computer modeling has shown significant reductions in the level of phosphorous and nitrogen, but data from water samples from the U.S. Geological Survey have not confirmed that progress. The inconsistencies between modeling and sampling data raise serious questions about the true status of efforts to clean up the Chesapeake Bay.

Witness List:

Panel I:

Rebecca Hammer, Director, Chesapeake Bay Program
Taylor Murhpy Jr., Secretary of Natural Resources, Commonwealth of Virginia
Lowell Bahner, Director, Chesapeake Bay Office, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Scott Phillips, Chesapeake Bay Coordinator, U.S. Geological Survey
Ann Pesiri Swanson, Executive Director, Chesapeake Bay Commission

Panel II:

Theresa Pierno, Vice President, Environmental Protection and Restoration, Chesapeake Bay Foundation
Dr. Donald F. Boesch, President, Center for Environmental Science, University of Maryland
Dr. Linda Shaffner, Associate Professor, Virginia Institute of Marine Science
Dr. Eileen Hofmann, Professor of Ocean, Earth and Atmospheric Science, Old Dominion University
Frances W. Porter, Executive Director, Virginia Seafood Council
Mark Wallace, Eastern Shore Watermen's Association

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