

2011 Year in Review



Congressman H. Morgan Griffith

Ninth Congressional District of Virginia



Table of Contents

Letter from Congressman Griffith.....	2
Congressman Griffith’s Legislation.....	3
House Legislative Highlights.....	6
House Energy and Commerce Committee Activity.....	8
Ninth District Outreach.....	10
Staying Connected in 2012.....	12



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

December 28, 2011

Dear Friend,

It is my privilege to represent and serve you in Congress. With the goal of keeping you informed, my office has compiled a *2011 Year in Review*, a brief summary of this year's legislative highlights in the House, my activity in the Energy and Commerce Committee, and Ninth District outreach. I hope you will find this document informative and useful.

This is a critical time for our nation. I know many of you are as concerned as I am about what is going on in Washington, job creation, and the economy. Too many Americans remain unemployed and the national debt is far too high.

In the remainder of the 112th Congress, I will continue to work tirelessly to address our nation's dire debt situation, promote policies that spur job creation, support legislation that encourages domestic energy production, and fight job-killing regulations. While we will face many challenges in 2012, I have great hope for the future of our country.

As always, do not hesitate to contact my office to share your legislative ideas or request assistance involving federal matters. My staff and I are here to help. I remain

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "H. Morgan Griffith".

H. MORGAN GRIFFITH
Member of Congress

Legislation Sponsored by Congressman Griffith

Congressman Griffith introduced several pieces of legislation during the first session of the 112th Congress. These bills deal with a variety of issues from delaying the EPA's Boiler MACT rules to reducing Member pay. One of Congressman Griffith's bills and amendments passed the House in 2011. For the bills that have not been taken up, there is still an opportunity for them to be acted on during the remainder of the 112th Congress. Below you will find information on a few of Congressman Griffith's bills:

Passed by the U.S. House of Representatives

H.R. 2250 – The EPA Regulatory Relief Act of 2011

Introduced: June 21, 2011

Cosponsors: 126

Status: H.R. 2250 passed the House on October 13, 2011, with a bipartisan vote of 275 – 142. The bill currently resides in the Senate.

The EPA Regulatory Relief Act of 2011 would provide a legislative fix for the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Boiler Maximum Achievable Control Technology (MACT) rules. Specifically, H.R. 2250 would direct the EPA to develop achievable standards for boilers, process heaters, and incinerators and extends compliance deadlines to allow facilities time to comply. Some mistakenly believe that the EPA's Boiler MACT rules apply only to big businesses, but in reality, they impact businesses of all sizes, colleges, universities, and hospitals – approximately 200,000 boilers nationwide. By one recent estimate, the Boiler MACT rules could result in \$14.5 billion in compliance costs and potentially put more than 230,000 American jobs at risk. This bipartisan jobs bill received the support of 41 Democrats in the House. Similar legislation in the Senate has gained 41 cosponsors, including 12 Democrats.

H. Amdt. 151 to H.R. 1

Introduced: February 18, 2011

Status: H. Amdt. 151 passed the House on February 19, 2011, with a bipartisan vote of 235-185. The underlying bill, H.R. 1, was not taken up by the Senate.

This amendment rescinds funding for the EPA's conductivity guidance that is harmful to the mining industry. Conductivity measures the ability of water to transport an electrical current. In order for a coal mine to receive a permit under the Clean Water Act, it must pass this test. Not even expensive bottled water, like Perrier and Evian, are of good enough quality to pump out of mines in Southwest Virginia, according to the EPA regulation. Permits issued under the Clean Water Act affect nearly 80,000 direct coal mining jobs, as well as the coal to power nearly 80 million homes. Not only are these reckless regulations a threat to businesses in the Ninth District, but they are a threat to jobs across the nation as well as America's energy security.

Pending in the U.S. House of Representatives

H.R. 335 – To provide for a 10 percent reduction in pay for Members of Congress

Introduced: January 19, 2011

Cosponsors: 1

Status: Referred to the House Oversight and Government Reform Subcommittee on Federal Workforce, U.S. Postal Service, and Labor Policy

As millions of American's face unemployment, Congressman Griffith believes that Members of Congress should be willing to take a pay cut. H.R. 335 would reduce pay for Members of Congress by 10 percent.

H.R. 1915 – State Compact Health Choice Act of 2011

Introduced: May 13, 2011

Status: Referred to the House Energy and Commerce and House Ways and Means Subcommittees on Health

H.R. 1915 would allow states to enter into interstate compacts in order to offer health insurance plans across state lines. These compacts could have the potential effect of broadening the pool of policyholders, which would generate more competition among health insurers, provide a wider array of plans, and in turn, lower costs for consumers.

H.R. 2036 – The American Alternative Fuels Act of 2011

Introduced: May 26, 2011

Cosponsors: 13

Status: Referred to the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Environment

The American Alternative Fuels Act would take major strides in expanding America's energy future. This legislation would break down the barriers to domestic alternative fuels – including fuels derived from coal, biomass, algae, and waste. The bill permits the federal government to buy a wide array of alternative fuels, increases transparency in the Loan Guarantee Program, promotes algae as a renewable fuel, and supports synthetic natural gas production. Additionally, H.R. 2036 allows the Department of Defense to enter into long-term contracts for purchasing alternative fuels.

H. J. RES.46 – The State Legislative Veto

Introduced: March 3, 2011

Cosponsors: 1

Status: Referred to House Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution

H. J. Res 46 is an amendment to the Constitution that would allow two-thirds of state legislatures to void any federal law or regulation. Article V of the Constitution allows two-thirds of state legislatures to propose changes to the Constitution by way of a Convention. Since that mechanism exists for changes to the Constitution, I believe states should have similar powers regarding federal laws and regulations.



Congressman Griffith spoke in support of his bill, the EPA Regulatory Relief Act (H.R. 2250), on the House floor.



Congressman Griffith visited the Clinch Valley Medical Center in Richlands.



Frank Newsome, an Old Regular Baptist Singer from Haysi (center), accepted his 2011 NEA National Heritage Fellowship award from Congressman Morgan Griffith.

Photo by Tom Pich

2011 Legislative Highlights

Over the past several years, federal spending has skyrocketed leaving the United States with a debt of more than \$15 trillion. Congress has a responsibility to the American people to rein in wasteful and excessive spending. High debt means a future of high interest, high inflation, high borrowing costs, low predictability, low confidence, and low jobs for our children and grandchildren. We cannot sustain this path. In addition to a growing debt, burdensome and costly federal regulations are impeding job creation and making America less competitive. Whether from the EPA, the FDA, or one of the other alphabet agencies, we have to carefully examine the impact of regulations being placed on America's businesses and job creators.

In 2011, House Republicans focused on pro-growth, pro-jobs policies aimed at getting our economy moving again and spurring job creation. Currently, 28 bipartisan job creating and job protecting bills passed by the House are awaiting Senate action.

Below are some of the legislative highlights from the House in 2011. Each bill can be explored in more depth on-line at <http://thomas.loc.gov/home/thomas.php>:

Repeal of Obama Care and the 1099 Mandate

- Repeal of Obama Care: In January, the House passed H.R. 2, the Repealing the Job-Killing Health Care Law Act.
- Repeal of the 1099 paperwork mandate in Obama Care: H.R. 4, the Small Business Paperwork Mandate Elimination Act of 2011, was passed by the House and Senate and signed into law in April.

Reducing Regulatory Burdens

- EPA Regulatory Relief Act of 2011 (H.R. 2250) – *Sponsored by Congressman Griffith*
- Farm Dust Regulation Prevention Act of 2011 (H.R. 1633)
- Regulations From the Executive in Need of Scrutiny (REINS) Act of 2011 (H.R. 10)
- Regulatory Accountability Act of 2011 (H.R. 3010)
- Regulatory Flexibility Improvements Act of 2011 (H.R. 527)
- Reducing Regulatory Burdens Act (H.R. 872)
- Clean Water Cooperative Federalism Act (H.R. 2018)
- Transparency in Regulatory Analysis of Impacts on The Nation (TRAIN) Act (H.R. 2401)
- Cement Sector Regulatory Relief Act (H.R. 2681)
- Coal Residuals Reuse and Management Act (H.R. 2273)

Encouraging Domestic Energy Production and American Jobs

- North American-Made Energy Security Act (H.R. 1938)
- Jobs and Energy Permitting Act of 2011 (H.R. 2021)
- Reversing President Obama's Offshore Moratorium Act (H.R. 1231)

- Putting the Gulf of Mexico Back to Work Act (H.R. 1229)
- Restarting American Offshore Leasing Now Act (H.R. 1230)
- Energy Tax Prevention Act (H.R. 910)

Tax Relief for Americans

- H.R. 674, the 3% Withholding Rule Repeal, passed the House and Senate and was signed into law in November.

Support for America's Veterans

- Passed by the House, the Veterans Opportunity to Work (VOW) Act of 2011 (H.R. 2433) would further ensure the government's commitment to provide employment opportunities and training services to veterans.
- The House passed Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2011, which increases the rates of disability compensation for disabled veterans during these difficult economic times.

Additional Pro-Job Legislation Passed by the House

- Fairness for High-Skilled Immigrants Act of 2011 (H.R. 3012)
- Consumer Financial Protection & Soundness Improvement Act (H.R. 1315)
- Protecting Jobs from Government Interference Act (H.R. 2587)
- Workforce Democracy and Fairness Act (H.R. 3094)
- Southeast Arizona Land Exchange and Conservation Act of 2011 (H.R. 1904)
- Small Company Capital Formation Act of 2011 (H.R. 1070)
- Workforce Democracy and Fairness Act (H.R. 3094)
- Entrepreneur Access to Capital Act (H.R. 2930)
- Access to Capital for Job Creators Act (H.R. 2940)
- To amend the securities laws to establish certain thresholds for shareholder registration, and for other purposes (H.R. 1965)



A group from Watauga Elementary School in Abingdon visited with Congressman Griffith in Washington, D.C.



House Energy and Commerce Committee Activity

Upon coming to Congress, Congressman Griffith was selected to serve on the House Energy and Commerce Committee. This committee assignment allows Congressman Griffith to work closely on many issues directly impacting the Ninth District. The Energy and Commerce Committee has broad jurisdiction over a variety of issues, including the availability of affordable energy, environmental quality, public health, telecommunications, consumer protection, food and drug safety, and commerce. The Committee also has oversight over multiple federal agencies, including the Department of Energy, Department of Health and Human Services, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). In addition to serving on the full Committee, Congressman Griffith is a member of the Subcommittee on Energy and Power and the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations.

Throughout the year, the Energy and Commerce Committee held numerous legislative hearings and reported a number of bills for consideration by the House. Below is a brief summary of some issues covered in 2011 by Congressman Griffith's Subcommittees. For a complete listing of House Energy and Commerce Committee activities, please visit www.republicans.energycommerce.house.gov.

Subcommittee on Energy and Power

In early 2011, the House launched the American Energy Initiative as a way to expand American energy production. The goals of this initiative are threefold:

1. Stopping government policies that are driving up gas prices
2. Expanding American energy production to lower costs & create more jobs
3. Promoting an "all of the above" strategy to increase all forms of American energy

Throughout the course of the year, many of this Subcommittee's hearings focused on various aspects of the American Energy Initiative. Congressman Griffith participated in numerous hearings on the American Energy Initiative and issues ranging from expediting the Keystone XL pipeline to offshore energy exploration to boiler regulations. The Subcommittee on Energy and Power also examined the EPA's budget, regulatory reform, and the effects of events in the Middle East on U.S. energy markets as well as climate science and the EPA's greenhouse gas regulations.

Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations

The role of this Subcommittee is to provide oversight of federal agencies and programs and, when necessary, conduct investigations.

Throughout the year, Congressman Griffith played an active role in the Subcommittee's investigation of the Department of Energy's \$535 million loan guarantee to the now-bankrupt solar energy company Solyndra. Several officials from the Obama Administration, including Secretary of Energy Steven Chu, testified before the Subcommittee regarding the loan guarantee and subordination of taxpayer money. Half a billion dollars of taxpayer money is gone and \$75 million subordinated, which means the taxpayers were illegally put in the backseat as secondary creditors. In November, the Subcommittee voted to issue a subpoena to the White House for important documents pertaining to this investigation. The Solyndra investigation is ongoing, and Congressman Griffith is hopeful that we will get to the bottom of the decision making process of this bad investment of taxpayer dollars.



Congressman Griffith questioned officials about the failed Solyndra loan guarantee in a Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations hearing.

Listed below are several of the other issues covered in the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations in 2011:

- Regulatory Reform
- White House transparency
- Oversight of Department of Energy spending and the EPA's budget
- Cybersecurity
- U.S. response to the nuclear power plant incident in Japan
- Health Care
 - Waste, fraud, and abuse in Medicare and Medicaid
 - The Protect Life Act
 - Cancellation of the CLASS Act

Ninth District Outreach

Throughout the year, Congressman Griffith and the Ninth District staff crisscrossed Southwest Virginia, including our areas of Southside and the Alleghany Highlands, attending events and meeting with constituents. Below are some highlights from 2011 involving Ninth District outreach:

- Established offices in Abingdon, Christiansburg, and Big Stone Gap.
- Traveling Staff Office Hours: Members of Congressman Griffith's staff host monthly traveling office hours in every county and city in the Ninth District.
- Town Hall Meetings: In 2011, Congressman Griffith held many public question and answer meetings with thousands of constituents and Ninth District businesses. In addition, Congressman Griffith has conducted telephone town halls across the entire Ninth District.
- Service Academy Days: Congressman Griffith held two Service Academy Days for Ninth District residents interested in attending one of our nation's Military Service Academies.
- Congressional Art Competition: Congressman Griffith hosted the Congressional Art Competition for Ninth District high school students. The Ninth District is proudly represented in the Capitol art display by Jessalyn Mullins of Norton.
- Launched the One More Job Initiative: This initiative sought input from constituents and local businesses about what it will take to create just one more job. Whether it is changing the tax code or rolling back a burdensome regulation, collaboration on this issue is critical.
- Hosted a Ninth District round table on sheep and goat production in an effort to seek out ways to expand local agriculture sectors.
- In 2011, Congressman Griffith visited each of the 27 jurisdictions in the Ninth District multiple times.



Congressman Griffith met with Jessalyn Mullins, winner of the Ninth District's 2011 Congressional Art Competition.



Congressman Griffith spoke with employees at Universal Fibers in Bristol.

- Met with economic development groups from across the Ninth District to gather and share ideas for bringing jobs to the region.
- Toured numerous medical facilities, clinics, businesses – both large and small – throughout the Ninth District.
- Visited elementary, middle, and high schools in the Ninth District to speak with students about civics and current events.
- Participated in the Governor’s Energy Conference, the Virginia Technology Council’s Energy Technology Summit, Tennessee Valley Corridor Board Meeting, and the Eastern Coal Council Conference.
- Spoke with civic groups in the Ninth District and attended important community events.
- Took part in medal ceremonies for local veterans receiving new and replacement medals.
- Urged the United States Postal Service to reconsider the potential closing of numerous Post Offices and processing facilities serving the Ninth District.
- In addition to Congressman Griffith’s activities, Ninth District staff attended ribbon cuttings, USPS public meetings, Chamber of Commerce events, senior citizens’ forums, project announcements, and closely followed local issues. His staff also assisted with grant applications for various Ninth District projects when requested.



Congressman Griffith presented Corporal James C. Rasnake with a long-deserved Bronze Star Medal with “V” Device for valorous actions.



Congressman Griffith toured Goodwill Industries in Radford.



Congressman Griffith held a Town Hall meeting in Riner.



Congressman Griffith participated in a public meeting about Forest Service issues in Covington.

Staying Connected in 2012

There are several ways to stay connected with what is happening in Congress and around the Ninth District. You can also contact one of the Ninth District offices or the Washington Office for any inquiries. Whether you have a legislative question, want to schedule a meeting, or need assistance with a federal agency, Congressman Griffith encourages you to stay in touch in 2012.

Contact Congressman Griffith Online

In order to be accessible and informative, Congressman Griffith's office has developed a user-friendly website where you can subscribe to the weekly e-newsletter, connect through social media, send Congressman Griffith an email, and view the schedule for traveling staff office hours. Please visit www.morgangriffith.house.gov to see all of the features the website offers.



Watch on YouTube

www.youtube.com/RepMorganGriffith



"Like" on Facebook

www.facebook.com/RepMorganGriffith



Follow on Twitter

www.twitter.com/RepMGriffith

Ninth Congressional District Office Contact Information

Washington, DC

1108 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: (202) 225-3861
Fax: (202) 225-0076

Abingdon Office

323 West Main Street
Abingdon, VA 24210
Phone: (276) 525-1405
Fax: (276) 525-1444

Christiansburg Office

17 West Main Street
Christiansburg, VA 24073
Phone: (540) 381-5671
Fax: (540) 381-5675

Big Stone Gap Office

Federal Courthouse
322 Wood Avenue E, Room 303
Big Stone Gap, VA 24219
By Appointment Only

www.morgangriffith.house.gov