

North Alabama, and it has paid off with hundreds of new jobs.

"In the early years, I saw the district's need for a regional economic development agenda," Cramer says. Issues like countering unemployment or building an airport were identified, and he went to work. With this agenda, he was "committed to tell our story better by working with necessary parties like the Alabama Development Office and other North Alabama economic development professionals."

As a member of the House Appropriations Committee, he also set out to provide the resources to help make North Alabama conducive to, and attractive for, economic development. His efforts manifested in securing funding for transportation and infrastructure development, including water and sewer projects. He also got money for workforce training initiatives across North Alabama, which earned him recognition for systematically setting the stage to invite growth in the Fifth District and surrounding areas.

In the years that followed, the successes have included U.S. Gypsum, Toyota's \$20 million production expansion at its Huntsville plant, National Rail Car, North American Lighting, Steelcase, the Boeing rocket plant in Decatur and the HudsonAlpha Institute for Biotechnology.

At the Toyota announcement in 2003, Cramer reinforced his goal of telling Alabama's story.

"They have discovered what a good area North Alabama is to do business, and this expansion is great news for both Toyota and the people of North Alabama," he told the crowd about a project that brought 350 to 500 new jobs. "We need these new good jobs, and I'm proud to stand here with Toyota today to make this announcement."

From the start, Cramer says he sought to represent Alabama as a "can-do state" and to tell its story better, but he also recognized regional economic growth would require teamwork throughout his nine terms in Congress.

By fortifying the state's image, infrastructure and teamwork on all levels, Alabama became more competitive and more attractive to prospects.

HudsonAlpha President Jim Hudson praised Cramer's energy and devotion to bringing about development.

"When HudsonAlpha was in its very formative stages, Congressman Cramer took the initiative," Hudson says. "In order to understand the potential of biotechnology in North Alabama, he traveled to leading biotechnology centers in Arizona and New York. Convinced that biotechnology would be an ideal engine of economic growth and human progress, Congressman Cramer became a tireless advocate. His role in the founding of HudsonAlpha was critical. Congressman Cramer's willingness to work hard, to listen to all sides, to investigate the issues and to build the key relationships needed have enhanced the quality of life for everyone in North Alabama."

In 2005 Cramer joined Hudson and Alabama Gov. Bob Riley to announce the creation of the HudsonAlpha Institute for Biotechnology in Huntsville. Cramer heralded a vital new direction for Alabama, saying, "With the creation of the HudsonAlpha Institute, we have an opportunity to lead our nation's biotechnology effort."

HudsonAlpha would turn out to be a crown jewel in setting the state on the biotech path. But Cramer has been involved in the recruitment and expansion of many North Alabama companies.

Just a year earlier, Cramer's regional economic approach had paid off with U.S. Gypsum Co.'s \$20 million expansion to the building material manufacturer's Bridgeport,

Ala., facility. Of the development, the congressman said at the time, "When a strong well-established company like U.S. Gypsum decides to expand, it reaffirms the fact that Jackson County is a great place to do business."

The location was completed in 1999 and provided 180 jobs.

In 2005, Cramer joined several state officials in announcing North American Lighting, a subsidiary of Tokyo-based Koito Manufacturing Co., was going to build its \$21 million, state-of-the-art manufacturing plant at the Northwest Alabama Airport Industrial Park in Muscle Shoals. The 200,000-square-foot facility, which is producing tail lamps for automakers like Toyota, Nissan and Honda, created 320 jobs. Cramer commended the Shoals region for working together on the project and attributed the success to the area's cooperative efforts.

"All of our area's economic development leaders were determined to do what it took to land this company, and today is a direct result of our efforts," Cramer told the group. "It is further proof that if we work together as one community, we will be much stronger and better prepared to promote the benefits of Northwest Alabama."

In 2006, which would turn out to be a banner year in the congressman's regional economic development efforts, he joined Gov. Bob Riley in breaking ground for the North American Lighting plant, and again hailed regional cooperation for winning the project.

"The successful recruitment of North American Lighting was the culmination of a partnership within the entire Shoals area," he said. "The county and municipal leaders here clearly showed that they no longer view the Tennessee River or city and county lines as barriers to economic progress, and they fully understand that a new facility anywhere in this region will reap economic benefits for the entire area. All of them should be commended for their leadership."

Cramer, as a member of the Appropriations Committee, secured \$600,000 in 2006 to help install water and wastewater infrastructure at the Muscle Shoals Industrial Park.

Again in 2006, Cramer in his annual economic recruitment trip with the North Alabama Industrial Development Association (NAIDA) to Chicago, Ill., promoted Alabama's capabilities and strengths to biotech leaders in an effort to expand its biotech base, showcasing HudsonAlpha as the state's opportunity to lead the nation's biotech efforts.

Cramer also led an economic development trip to New York City, again with NAIDA and area development officials, reinforcing their "economic development team" in recruiting new industry and maintaining relationships with existing businesses. He also reinforced a central theme to his economic development success. "Each year, this trip sends a strong message to business leaders and site consultants that our region is united and committed to doing what it takes to bring new industry to North Alabama."

At an economic development summit held by Cramer and U.S. Rep. Lincoln Davis (D-Tenn.) with business and government leaders in North Alabama and Southern Tennessee, both congressmen strongly emphasized the value of regional efforts to grow and recruit business in areas on both sides of the Alabama-Tennessee border.

Collectively, their districts include Arnold Engineering Development Center, the Marshall Space Flight Center, Redstone Arsenal, automobile assembly and supplier plants, and many other manufacturing facilities and small businesses. Also, as a result, many individuals in both Alabama and Tennessee have chosen to live in one state and work in another. The Base Realignment and Closure

Commission (BRAC) recommendations were discussed, in which 4,700 jobs were directed to the Redstone Arsenal.

Cramer and Davis also met with officials throughout the Tennessee Valley to learn more about how both communities could further compliment each other.

"This team effort made all the difference in the world," Cramer says of his industrial recruitment efforts in his nine terms in Congress. It took many meetings to generate consensus among the counties and a new view on how to get it done. "I worked without barriers, without county lines."

## PERSHING HEALTH SYSTEM

### HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 25, 2008

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Pershing Health System, who will be dedicating a new addition to their healthcare facility on October 4th, 2008. This addition consists of a 38,000 square foot addition that will provide better care and access to the patients who utilize the services of Pershing Health System.

Pershing Health System provides services to over 40,000 patients each year. Pershing Health System has been providing service to its patients since 1960, and these latest improvements will help to see that its patients receive the best care possible.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in recognizing Pershing Health System, a professional health care system that strives to provide the best care to the patients it serves. It is truly an honor to serve Pershing Health System in the United States Congress.

## RECOGNIZING THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE KING GEORGE RURITAN CLUB

### HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 25, 2008

Mr. WITTMAN of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate the King George Ruritan Club on the occasion of its 70th anniversary. This fine association has its origins in 1938 when a group of men banded together for the concerns of the well-being of King George County to form the King George Ruritan Club.

The King George Ruritan Club was sponsored by the Richmond County Ruritan on October 31, 1938, and granted National Charter # 57 with 27 members on the roster with J. W. Bland elected President. The Club began its service to the community in support of PTAs, church groups, the Daughters of America and the Rebekah Lodge by serving Ruritan dinners to raise funds for their activities.

King George Ruritan was reorganized in 1948 after WW II with their new major initiatives to focus on the construction of sidewalks through the village to protect school children, and the King George Volunteer Fire Department. Throughout the 1950's the Club was instrumental in the installation of a public telephone at the Court House, the collection clothes for the needy, and support of the Ground Observer Corps.