

News  
From \_\_\_\_\_

CONGRESSMAN

# Nick Rahall

WEST VIRGINIA-4th DISTRICT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
July 19, 1977

CONTACT: Michael Serpe  
202-225-3452

Washington D.C. --- U.S. Representative Nick J. Rahall (D-4th), today urged the House Rules Committee to approve action on the Black Lung Reform Act of 1977, because, "It will give coal miners and their families the opportunity for just compensation they deserve."

Rahall, a sponsor and avid supporter of the Black Lung Bill, told the Committee, "Just as the nation needs a sound energy policy, it also needs a sound compensation policy for those who have suffered economic, mental and physical anguish from a disease which can only be contracted from a lifetime of labor in the dark, dusty catacombs of our nation's mines."

Last month, Congressman Rahall attacked the House Rules Committee for being a, "road block" to the Black Lung Bill, since the measure had passed the House Education and Labor Committee on March 31. Rahall today said however that, "I am encouraged that the Committee has finally decided to take action on this bill, that will have an immense impact on southern West Virginia."

Congressman Rahall observed that there is still a ways to go before the measure becomes law, "I am well aware that this bill faces a stiff uphill fight in Congress, and that is why I am personally contacting as many of my colleagues as possible over the next few days to build support for the bill."

Rahall, in his statement before the Rules Committee, explained the provisions of the Black Lung Reform Act and said, "Because of President Carter's energy proposals, coal will once again become important to the nation's economy, and that is why we must protect the individuals who at the present time have twice the disability and death rate than the general population."

In conclusion, Rahall pointed out to the Committee, that the Black Lung Bill is an essential part of our nation's long-term energy policy.