

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

CONGRESSMAN

# Nick Rahall

WEST VIRGINIA-4th DISTRICT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Mike Serpe  
202-225-3452

Washington D.C. --- U.S. Representative Nick J. Rahall (D-4th), has introduced legislation in the House of Representatives that would consolidate the functions of disaster assistance and emergency preparedness.

"The status of emergency preparedness presently is characterized by duplicity in effort and in goals, and by total inadequacy in coordination," Rahall said.

Congressman Rahall pointed out that at the present time, three different agencies, the Federal Preparedness Agency of the General Services Administration, the Federal Disaster Assistance Administration, and the Defense Civil Preparedness Agency are all involved in disaster assistance, emergency preparedness, and civil defense and planning programs.

Rahall stated, "Additionally, a number of other agencies are at least involved in relief operations, and the end result of this organizational maze is total confusion."

"I believe this legislation would definitely help in rectifying this abysmal situation," Rahall stated.

Rahall along with the bill's chief sponsor, Rep. Paul Tsongas (D-Mass.), feel that the measure will have a net effect of eliminating two unnecessary federal agencies and will save \$15 million annually. Rahall pointed out, "Not only will the taxpayer's dollars be saved, but at the same time the essential national emergency preparedness programs will be upgraded and improved."

Under this bill, a new agency will be created. The Federal Emergency Assistance and Preparedness Administration with a Director as a permanent member of the National Security Council will have responsibility in cases of major natural disasters as well as jurisdiction over mobilization of the civilian economy and civil preparedness for nuclear attack.

In conclusion Rahall said, "This reorganization concept has widespread support among state, county, and local officials, because of the simplicity that it will lend to the federal-state relations when federal assistance is needed due to disaster."