

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

CONGRESSMAN

# Nick Rahall

WEST VIRGINIA-4th DISTRICT

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Washington D.C. --- U.S. Representative Nick J. Rahall (D-4th), told a House Subcommittee that, "unless decaying bridges are replaced in West Virginia, many areas in the State will be cut off from receiving goods and services."

Rahall made his remarks in a statement prepared for the Subcommittee on Surface Transportation, which held hearings to emphasize the national bridge deficiency problems faced by many States. Rahall is a member of the subcommittee.

Congressman Rahall also expressed his support for a more aggressive program to repair and build bridges throughout West Virginia and the country. The Subcommittee on Surface Transportation has estimated that it may cost close to \$2 billion each year, for the next several years to complete the task.

Rahall stated, "I have learned that there are 6100 bridges in my State under the control of the State Highway Department. 57% of those bridges were built before 1934."

"Two hundred bridges have safe load capacities of less than 3 tons," Rahall said, "which means that an auto weighing 3600 pounds is unable to use 200 West Virginia bridges." Rahall went on to say, "More than 600 bridges have critical or structural conditions which require replacements or repairs."

Rahall told the subcommittee, "The bridge problem of my State is exemplified by the fact that one quarter of West Virginia's current bond program is devoted to bridge replacement, however only 300 bridges can be replaced or repaired with these funds."

In summary, Congressman Rahall observed, "Many of the decaying structures, which barely meet horse and buggy standards, must be replaced. With our nation depending more and more on coal as an energy source, my State must have the transportation capabilities to haul the coal out of the fields and to the users. With the end result being economic growth for West Virginia."