

News
From _____

CONGRESSMAN

Nick Rahall

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Charleston, West Virginia --- U.S. Representative Nick J. Rahall (D-4th), said today, "Work is being done to assist the flood victims in southern West Virginia, but not enough!"

"Every Federal and State in the country has spent over 20 years studying how to control flooding and what to do after they occur, but none of these studies are helping the victims of this disaster," Rahall stated.

Congressman Rahall has spent the last two days in his District, that has been almost entirely damaged by the recent flood. Rahall also sent the following telegram to President Carter yesterday:

PRESIDENT CARTER: TODAY YOU WILL RECEIVE A REQUEST FROM GOV. JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER, IV, TO NAME TEN WEST VIRGINIA COUNTIES FEDERAL DISASTER AREAS. SEVEN OF THE TEN COUNTIES ARE LOCATED IN THE FOURTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF WHICH I REPRESENT.

I STRONGLY URGE YOUR QUICK AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION ON THIS REQUEST.

I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO ASK YOU TO VISIT SOUTHERN WEST VIRGINIA TO SEE FIRST HAND THE IMMENSE DAMAGE THAT HAS OCCURED.

Rahall announced that the main relief center will be set up in Bluefield, with five other offices in Williamson, Logan, Iaeger or Welch, a center near Beckley, and one in the Wayne County area.

Rahall also pointed out that a temporary office of the National Flood Insurers Association is being set up in Logan to handle as many as 1,000 claims for losses in the Logan and Welch areas.

Congressman Rahall said, "insurance agents in the area should contact U.S. Fidelity and Guaranty Company in Charleston for additional information." The phone number is: 304-344-1692.

"Flood victims should make an inventory of damaged or destroyed property," Rahall said. "If the damage is substantial, a detailed building repair estimate should be secured from a contractor. The documentation will be of help in cases of uninsured casualty loss for income tax purposes," Rahall stated.

"Once President Carter declares the counties Federal disaster areas a number of relief services will become available," Rahall pointed out. (Attached)

"Area businessmen should also be in touch with representatives of Federal agencies on the seen to obtain assistance," Rahall observed.

"We must intensify our efforts to help those who have suffered from this disaster," Congressman Rahall concluded.

ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE AFTER THE DECLARATION OF A FEDERAL DISASTER AREA

- Temporary housing for disaster victims whose homes are uninhabitable until other housing resources are available, usually up to a year with periodic check ups.
- Minimum essential repairs to owner occupied residences in lieu of other types of temporary housing resources, so that families can return quickly to their damaged homes.
- Temporary assistance with mortgage or rental payments for persons faced with loss of their residential homes because of disaster created financial hardship for a period not to exceed 12 months.
- Disaster unemployment assistance and job placement assistance of those unemployed as a result of a major disaster.
- Disaster loans to individuals, businesses, and farmers for refinancing, repair, rehabilitation, or replacement of damaged real and personal property not fully covered by insurance.
- Agricultural assistance including technical assistance, payments of up to 80% of the cost eligible farmers who perform emergency conservation measures on farmland damaged by the disaster, and donation of federally owned feed grain for co-mingled livestock and herd preservation.
- Distribution of food coupons to eligible disaster victims.
- Individual and family grants of up to \$5000 to meet disaster related necessary expenses or serious needs of those adversely affected by a major disaster when they are unable to meet such expenses or needs through other programs or other means.
- Legal services to low-income families and individuals.
- Consumer counseling and assistance in obtaining insurance benefits.
- Crisis counseling and referrals to appropriate mental health agencies to relieve disaster caused mental health problems.
- Social Security assistance for recipients or survivors, such as death or disability benefits or monthly payments.
- Veteran's assistance such as death benefits, pensions, insurance settlements and adjustments to home mortgages held by the VA if a VA insured home has been damaged.
- To help individuals to get information and obtain the help available from various Federal agencies, Federal Disaster Assistance Agency establishes centers in the areas affected.
- Representatives of HUD, FmHA, Social Security, FDAA, local governments, private relief agencies, and other organizations which can provide assistance or counseling are available to register and advise disaster victims.
- Mobile teams may be sent to assist persons in the areas not easily accessible to the main disaster centers.