

News  
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CONGRESSMAN

# Nick Rahall

WEST VIRGINIA-4th DISTRICT

For Immediate Release

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Washington D.C. --- U.S. Representative Nick J. Rahall (D-4th), has introduced two measures to assist our nation's veterans.

H.R. 904, the Veterans' Benefits Pass-Through Bill, would make certain that people receiving veterans' pension benefits and social security will not have increases in their social security offset by decreases in their veterans' benefits.

"The need for this legislation is critical," Congressman Rahall stated, "since 80% of the 5,470,000 veterans' pension recipients also receive social security benefits. Many of these people count on two forms of relief as their sole means of support."

Rahall went on to say, "These people on fixed incomes cannot get ahead of the inflation game--whenever Social Security gives them a cost-of-living increase, the VA takes it back by cutting their veterans' benefits."

Congressman Rahall pointed out that the measure has already received wide bi-partisan support, and has the backing of members on the House Veterans' Affairs Committee.

Rahall also introduced the Veterans' Administrative Procedure and Judicial Review Act. This measure would provide for judicial review of administrative decisions made by the Veterans' Administration.

"The only recourse for a veteran desiring to challenge a decision on his VA benefits, " Congressman Rahall said, "is to appeal to the Board of Veterans' Appeals, which is composed of VA employees."

"My bill would allow veterans full access to legal counsel in proceedings before the Veterans' Administration, a practice that has been severely limited in the past," Rahall stated.

"I believe this measure forces the accountability of Federal agencies," Rahall went on to say. "To deny a citizen access to an attorney, and also to isolate a Federal agency from the scrutiny of the Federal courts goes against the very principles of our constitutional system."

This measure has also been referred to the House Veterans' Affairs Committee.