

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

CONGRESSMAN

# Nick Rahall

WEST VIRGINIA-4th DISTRICT

For Immediate Release  
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Marmet, W. Va. --- U.S. Representative Nick Rahall (D-4th), said today that he is carrying out the pledges he made to the people of his Congressional District concerning black lung legislation, in action he has taken during his first full week in Congress.

In a meeting with the West Virginia Black Lung Association, the Regional Black Lung Association and other allied groups concerned with black lung at the Marmet Community Center, Rahall announced that he will introduce a resolution in Congress, to provide for additional hearing officers in the reviewing and processing of black lung claims.

"The Labor Department's process for reviewing black lung claims is grossly inefficient," Congressman Rahall stated. "From June, 1973 to December, 1976, only 3,800 black lung claims were approved out of the 104,000 submitted to the Department. At the present time, Labor Department figures show that, 51,200 black lung claims have not yet been reviewed."

Congressman Rahall said, "The only way I see to speed up the processing of claims and to obtain more positive results for the miners of West Virginia, is for the Labor Department to bring in additional qualified individuals to hear and determine the unresolved cases. I believe my resolution will do just that."

Rahall's resolution will be referred to the House Committee on Education and Labor. The Beckley Democrat is confident the measure will receive quick action.

Congressman Rahall also announced his co-sponsorship of the Simon-Perkins Black Lung bill, HR 1532, after discussing the measure with both Congressman Paul Simon (D-Ill.), and Congressman Carl Perkins (D-Ky.).

The measure, entitled the "Black Lung Reform Act of 1977", will make a number of technical changes in the present law, the Coal Mine Health and Safety Act of 1969.

The 94th Congress considered similar amendments to the 1969 law, but the Senate failed to pass a House approved measure.

The meeting, which was held to discuss the proposed black lung legislation, was attended by black lung association representatives from

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