

News
From _____

CONGRESSMAN

Nick Rahall

WEST VIRGINIA-4th DISTRICT

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Washington D.C. --- "It seems that the federal agencies administering the new black lung law are determined to ignore their responsibilities to the victims of black lung disease," Fourth District Congressman Nick J. Rahall, (D-WV), charged today in a letter to his colleagues in the United States House of Representatives from coal producing areas.

Rahall stated that, "Neither the Department of Labor nor the Social Security Administration has yet written the regulations with which to administer the black lung program."

Congressman Rahall, a co-sponsor and avid supporter of the Black Lung Reform which was signed into law on March 1, felt that the new law would speed up the processing of claims. However, Rahall said, "I found this week that it will be at least August 1 before the first claim can be decided under the new law."

"There is no excuse for this kind of delay," Congressman Rahall observed, "my constituents and yours who suffer from black lung do not need more delays. They need action and assistance."

Congressman Rahall is urging the support of his fellow congressmen from coal producing to join him in pushing the Department of Labor and Social Security Administration to expedite all action currently being taken on the processing of the regulations.

"We need to urge these agencies to do everything possible to guard against further delays, and achieve the soonest possible aid for our miners and their families," Rahall concluded.