

Washington D.C. --- A bill co-sponsored by Fourth District Congressman Nick J. Rahall, (D-WV), that will improve pension programs for the nation's veterans, has moved a step closer to becoming law. HR 10173, has been approved by the House Veterans Committee and is expected to receive quick consideration by the full House of Representatives.

Congressman Rahall explained some of the major reforms included in the measure, "This legislation will improve the pension programs for veterans, and survivors of veterans, of the Mexican War, World War I, World War II, the Korean conflict, and the Vietnam era. The income support level for a veteran has been increased from the present level of \$2,364 to \$4,000 per year. For one dependent, the income has been increased to \$5,200 as opposed to the present, \$2,544 a year."

Rahall went on to say, "Without a doubt the most important section of this veteran improvement act, is the fact that from now on when Social Security benefits are increased, a veteran or his spouse, will not have their veteran's pension reduced."

"I have always looked at this practice by the government as being a give with one hand, and take away with other hand approach and I am happy to have played a part in seeing this unfair activity changed," Rahall stated.

A World War I veteran, upon reaching the age of 80, will also benefit from this new law, Congressman Rahall said, "World War I veterans will receive a pension at the same rate as a house-bound veteran currently receives, which is \$4,804."

"Veterans are very special people," Congressman Rahall observed, "they are the individuals who have risked their lives so that this nation will be free, I am very pleased to be able to play a major role in seeing that these special Americans are compensated for their bravery."