

News
From _____

CONGRESSMAN

Nick Rahall

WEST VIRGINIA-4th DISTRICT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
JUNE 13, 1979

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WASHINGTON D.C. --- IN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER RESOURCES, WEST VIRGINIA'S FOURTH DISTRICT CONGRESSMAN NICK J. RAHALL SAID, "MANY OF THE VICTIMS OF THE 1977 FLOOD DISASTER ARE STILL IN THE PROCESS OF RECOVERING WHILE THE FEAR OF MORE SEVERE FLOODING LOOMS LARGER AND LARGER IN THEIR DAILY LIVES."

THE SUBCOMMITTEE IS HOLDING A NUMBER OF HEARINGS ON S. 703, THE WATER RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 1979. THE SUBCOMMITTEE IS CHAIRED BY SEN. MIKE GRAVEL (D-ALASKA).

RAHALL CLAIMED, "THE RESIDENTS OF THE TUG VALLEY CANNOT AND SHOULD NOT HAVE TO WAIT ANY LONGER FOR FLOOD PROTECTION THEY NEED AND DESERVE, BECAUSE THEY ARE THE SAME INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE BEING CALLED UPON TO SHOULDER THE BURDEN OF INCREASED ENERGY PRODUCTION THROUGH COAL -- A BURDEN WHICH IS BEING MET BY AN ALL OUT EFFORT."

"EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH IN SOUTHERN WEST VIRGINIA AND EASTERN KENTUCKY ARE THREATENED BY BOTH ADVERSE IMPACTS ON COAL PRODUCTION AND BY HAZARDOUS CONDITIONS IN THE FLOOD PLAINS," RAHALL SAID.

"I MOST STRONGLY URGE THE ENACTMENT OF THIS LEGISLATION, BOTH FOR HUMANITARIAN REASONS, AND ON THE BASIS OF THE NATIONAL INTEREST IN MAXIMIZING THE OUTPUT AND AVAILABILITY OF COAL," THE CONGRESSMAN STATED.

CONGRESSMAN RAHALL ALSO DISCUSSED THE GALLIPOLIS LOCKS AND DAM ON THE OHIO RIVER. RAHALL OBSERVED, "NAVIGATIONAL TRAFFIC THROUGH THE GALLIPOLIS LOCKS ARE RAPIDLY RISING, AND WITH THE PROJECTED INCREASE IN COAL TRAFFIC, DELAYS IN AWAITING LOCK ACCESS SEVERELY BURDEN COMMERCE IN NOT ONLY COAL, BUT IN PETROLEUM PRODUCTS, STEEL, CHEMICALS AND OTHER BASIC COMMODITIES."

"IT IS FOR THIS REASON," RAHALL SAID, "THAT I ALSO SUPPORT AN AMENDMENT TO AUTHORIZE CONSTRUCTION OF THE GALLIPOLIS LOCKS AND DAM MODIFICATION PROJECT," BECAUSE FAILURE TO REMOVE THIS BOTTLE NECK CAN HAVE ADVERSE IMPACT ON COAL MINING JOBS AND RELATED ECONOMIC INTERESTS IN SOUTHERN WEST VIRGINIA."