

News
From _____

CONGRESSMAN

Nick Rahall

WEST VIRGINIA-4th DISTRICT

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Washington D.C. --- West Virginia's Fourth District

Congressman Nick J. Rahall, today expressed his concern over an Administration plan to eliminate over 1800 Farmers Home Administration county offices. Rahall stated his opposition in a letter to Secretary of Agriculture Bob Bergland.

Congressman Rahall pointed out, "Various loan and grant programs under the Farmers Home Administration, provide necessary funds for rural housing, water and sewer systems, and business and industrial development that are often unobtainable through any other source."

"As a matter of fact," Rahall pointed out, "in 1978 alone, Farmers Home programs distributed \$144.5 Million in loans and grants for rural development in the State of West Virginia."

The reduction of the over 1800 Farmers Home Administration county offices is being considered by President Carter as part of his Government Reorganization Plan.

Congressman Rahall stated, "I believe the county Farmers Home offices enable a closer working relationship to come about between local officials and representatives of a Federal agency. To do away with this concept, would reduce the effectiveness of the services provided."

"In a state, like West Virginia, which is faced with a critical housing shortage, Farmers Home Administration programs are essential if our citizens are to live in safe and decent housing, and healthy growing communities," Congressman Rahall observed

"I am the first one to say, that Government must be better, not bigger," Rahall concluded, "however when a program is doing what it is suppose to do, as in the case of these FmHA county offices, I could not support the efforts to shut down the offices."