

News
From _____

CONGRESSMAN

Nick Rahall

WEST VIRGINIA-4th DISTRICT

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RAHALL CALLS FOR CONTINUATION OF CARDINAL

WASHINGTON D.C. --- WEST VIRGINIA'S FOURTH DISTRICT
CONGRESSMAN NICK J. RAHALL, HAS CALLED UPON HIS COLLEAGUES
IN THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO MAINTAIN THE SERVICE
OF THE AMTRAK CARDINAL ROUTE IN WEST VIRGINIA, BY SAYING,
"WEST VIRGINIANS WILL BE LEFT WITH LITTLE IN THE WAY OF PUBLIC
TRANSPORTATION IF THE CARDINAL IS NOT RESUMED."

RAHALL HAS SENT A LETTER TO THE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE WHO
WILL SERVE ON THE HOUSE-SENATE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE FOR THE
1982 DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION APPROPRIATIONS BILL, HR 4209.

CONGRESSMAN RAHALL'S LETTER IS BELOW:

Dear :

Twice this year congressional intent has been ignored by the National Railroad Passenger Corporation with respect to the Cardinal. In both the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981 and the Continuing Resolution (H.J.Res. 325) report language suggested that Amtrak continue operating the Cardinal between Washington, D.C., and Chicago. However, despite previous assurances from Amtrak President Alan Boyd that the corporation could run the Cardinal with an authorized funding level of \$735 million for fiscal year 1982, on October 1, 1981, the line was discontinued.

Amtrak President Boyd recently claimed that he could not continue operating the Cardinal without a clear mandate from Congress, meaning that report language did not have the substance of law. The Senate, in its fiscal year 1982 Transportation Appropriations bill, is seeking to clarify the intent of Congress through the inclusion of statutory language stating that "the Corporation shall provide through rail passenger service between Washington, D.C. and Chicago, via Cincinnati." Report language inserted by the Senate on H.R. 4209 further strengthens this position.

With this in mind, I urge you to accept the Senate language pertaining to the Cardinal during the Transportation Appropriations conference. Ridership on the line met the congressionally mandated criteria of 150 PM/TM during June and July of this year. In addition, the Cardinal was meeting the financial criteria established by Congress shortly before it was discontinued. Of equal importance is the steady loss of mass transit opportunities for the people of West Virginia who have been impacted under airline deregulation, the elimination of the Shenandoah and possibly the loss of bus service under the bus deregulation measure pending before Congress. West Virginians will be left with little in the way of public transportation if the Cardinal is not resumed.