

TAPE FOR MARCH 10

THIS IS CONGRESSMAN NICK RAHALL.

THE FUTURE OF THE BLACK LUNG PROGRAM IS ESSENTIAL TO MANY WEST VIRGINIA COAL MINERS AND THEIR FAMILIES. MY PAST STRONG SUPPORT OF THE PROGRAM SHOWS MY COMMITMENT AND WILLINGNESS TO MAKE SURE IT REMAINS ~~VIABLE AND~~ HELPFUL TO THOSE MINERS WHO NEED ASSISTANCE.

IN THE COMING WEEKS, CONGRESS WILL BE ~~UNDERTAKING A~~ REVIEW ~~OF~~ PRESIDENT REAGAN'S ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN. INCLUDED IN THIS PACKAGE, ARE SOME PROPOSED CHANGES IN THE ~~PRESENT~~ ^{current} BLACK LUNG PROGRAM.

~~NOW~~ I AGREE ~~WITH THE PRESIDENT~~ THAT ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS ARE NEEDED TO MAKE THE PROGRAM MORE STREAMLINED--THAT DELAYS ^{& that the Black Trust Fund must be made solvent} MUST BE ELIMINATED--AND ABOVE ALL ELSE, MINERS WHO HAVE BLACK LUNG, DESERVE AND SHOULD RECEIVE BENEFITS ^{quickly}

^{changed} BLACK LUNG BENEFITS ARE NOT A PRIVILEGE, AS SOME HAVE ~~STATED~~--THEY ARE A RIGHT, GRANTED BY LAW.

WE ALL WANT TO SEE MORE COAL MINED AND UTILIZED, BUT IN DOING SO, ALL AMERICANS MUST REALIZE THAT EVEN THOUGH COAL IS AN IMPORTANT RESOURCE--OUR MOST PRECIOUS NATURAL RESOURCE IS THE COAL MINER HIMSELF.

AMERICA'S ENERGY FUTURE RESTS IN THE HILLS OF WEST VIRGINIA, AND IN OTHER COAL AREAS THROUGHOUT THIS GREAT NATION. I PLAN TO CONTINUE MY WORK TO ADVANCE THIS GOAL.

THIS IS CONGRESSMAN NICK RAHALL.