

News
From _____

CONGRESSMAN

Nick Rahall

WEST VIRGINIA-4th DISTRICT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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WASHINGTON D.C. --- WEST VIRGINIA'S FOURTH DISTRICT CONGRESSMAN NICK J. RAHALL, HAS BEEN NAMED TO SERVE ON THE HOUSE-SENATE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE, THAT WILL CONSIDER AMENDMENTS TO THE SURFACE MINING ACT.

CONGRESSMAN RAHALL, CHAIRMAN OF THE CONGRESSIONAL COAL GROUP AND LONG-TIME SUPPORTER OF THE SO-CALLED "ROCKEFELLER AMENDMENT," WILL BE AMONG 15 MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE INTERIOR AND INSULAR AFFAIRS COMMITTEE TO SERVE ON THE CONFERENCE.

RAHALL, LATE LAST YEAR, HAD HIS EFFORTS TO PUSH THE ROCKEFELLER AMENDMENT BLOCKED BY INTERIOR COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN, REP. MORRIS K. UDALL, (D-ARIZ), WHO IS A STRONG OPPONENT OF ANY CHANGES IN THE SURFACE MINING LAW.

DESPITE SENATE EFFORTS TO BY-PASS REP. UDALL ON THIS ISSUE, THE HOUSE MEMBERS OF THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE WILL BE LED BY UDALL.

COMMENTING ON THE MAKE-UP OF THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE, RAHALL OBSERVED, "THE CARDS ARE STACKED AGAINST US, BUT EVERY ATTEMPT WILL BE MADE TO PUSH COAL'S POSITION ON THIS ISSUE, AND TO CARRY OUT THE TRUE INTENT OF CONGRESS."

"WE CAN MINE COAL SAFELY AND IN AN ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND MANNER," CONGRESSMAN RAHALL POINTED OUT. "INDIVIDUAL STATES NEED THE FLEXIBILITY TO OPERATE THEIR OWN MINING PROGRAMS, WHILE STILL MEETING MINIMUM FEDERAL GUIDELINES," RAHALL SAID.

THE HOUSE-SENATE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE WAS NECESSARY BECAUSE COAL STATE SENATORS AMENDED A PREVIOUSLY HOUSE PASSED, NON-CONTROVERSIAL BILL, TO INCLUDE THE PRO-COAL LANGUAGE.

"I DON'T GIVE UP EASY, WHEN THE FUTURE OF COAL IS AT STAKE," CONGRESSMAN RAHALL CONCLUDED.

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