

News
From _____

CONGRESSMAN

Nick Rahall

WEST VIRGINIA-4th DISTRICT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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RAHALL SEEKS FUNDS FOR COAL JOBS

WASHINGTON D.C. --- WEST VIRGINIA'S FOURTH DISTRICT CONGRESSMAN NICK J. RAHALL, HAS INTENSIFIED HIS EFFORTS TO PUT UNEMPLOYED COAL MINERS BACK TO WORK.

RAHALL, CHAIRMAN OF THE CONGRESSIONAL COAL GROUP, IN A LETTER TO MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE, HAS CALLED FOR THE FUNDING OF A PROGRAM, "WHICH WOULD FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL GOAL, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME STIMULATE EMPLOYMENT IN THE COAL MINING INDUSTRY."

CONGRESSMAN RAHALL POINTED OUT, "AT THE PRESENT TIME, THERE IS A BALANCE OF \$630 MILLION IN THE ABANDONED MINE RECLAMATION FUND, WHICH IS PAID INTO BY THE COAL INDUSTRY."

"IT IS MY HOPE," RAHALL STATED, "THAT \$150 MILLION OF THESE FEDERAL DOLLARS CAN BE APPROPRIATED TO HIRE UNEMPLOYED WORKERS TO UNDERTAKE RECLAMATION PROJECTS."

"SINCE UNEMPLOYED COAL, CONSTRUCTION AND RELATED INDUSTRY WORKERS ARE ALREADY TRAINED IN THE SKILLS NEEDED TO RECLAIM ABANDONED MINE LANDS, NO FUNDS WOULD HAVE TO BE DIRECTED TO JOB RETRAINING," RAHALL SAID. "IT IS ESTIMATED THAT 40,000 UNEMPLOYED WORKERS CAN BE PUT BACK TO WORK UNDER THIS PROPOSAL." CONGRESSMAN RAHALL STRESSED.

"IN LIGHT OF THE DEPRESSED STATE OF THE COAL INDUSTRY, IT IS MY BELIEF THAT THESE FUNDS FROM THE ABANDONED MINE PROGRAM WOULD NOT ONLY IMPROVE THE ENVIRONMENT IN COAL-PRODUCING REGIONS, BUT CONTRIBUTE TO THE ECONOMIC REJUVENATION OF AREAS, LIKE SOUTHERN WEST VIRGINIA, EXPERIENCING HIGH LEVELS OF UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE COAL INDUSTRY," RAHALL CONCLUDED.

CONGRESSMAN RAHALL STATED THAT HE HOPED FOR APPROVAL OF THIS PROPOSAL DURING CONGRESS' LAME-DUCK SESSION.

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