

Nick Rahall

WEST VIRGINIA-4th DISTRICT

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CONTACT: MIKE SERPE
202-225-3452

W. VA. TO BENEFIT FROM HIGHWAY BILL, RAHALL SAYS

WASHINGTON D.C. --- "OUR NATION AND STATE ARE AT A CROSSROADS IN TRANSPORTATION PLANNING," SAID REP. NICK J. RAHALL, "AND WITH THE PASSAGE OF THE SURFACE TRANSPORTATION ACT, WE NOW HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO REPAIR AMERICA'S INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUT PEOPLE BACK TO WORK."

CONGRESSMAN RAHALL'S COMMENTS WERE MADE IN SUPPORT OF THE 1982 HIGHWAY WHICH PASSED THE HOUSE ON DECEMBER 6.

RAHALL STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE MEASURE TO WEST VIRGINIA: "WITH THE FACT THAT HALF OF OUR STATE'S BRIDGES ARE OBSOLETE; I-64 NEEDS TO BE COMPLETED; AND THAT COUNTLESS CRUMBLING SECONDARY ROADS ARE COSTING WEST VIRGINIA DRIVERS AN AVERAGE OF 13 CENTS PER GALLON OF GAS; THE \$160 MILLION AVAILABLE IN THIS LEGISLATION FOR OUR STATE WILL BE PUT TO GOOD USE," RAHALL POINTED OUT.

"IN ADDITION," RAHALL, WHO IS A MEMBER OF THE HOUSE PUBLIC WORKS AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE WHICH DEVELOPED THE LEGISLATION, SAID, "THIS MEASURE CONTAINS MY PROVISION TO ASSIST COAL PRODUCING STATES IN REPAIRING SO-CALLED COAL-HAUL ROADS."

"TODAY, THE NATIONAL COAL MARKET IS BENEFITTING AT THE EXPENSE OF WEST VIRGINIAN TAXPAYERS, WHO MUST NOW PAY FOR THE REPAIR OF THESE COAL HAUL ROADS," RAHALL POINTED OUT. "MY EFFORT HAS NOW MADE IT CLEAR THAT IT IS A NATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY TO REPAIR THESE ROADS, WHICH ARE SO IMPORTANT TO AMERICA'S ENERGY FUTURE---AND IMPORTANT TO THE DAY-TO-DAY LIVES OF WEST VIRGINIANS."

SPECIFIC DOLLAR FIGURES FOR WEST VIRGINIA ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- INTERSTATE HIGHWAY RESTORATION,
RECONSTRUCTION & RESURFACING.....\$15 MILLION
- INTERSTATE CONSTRUCTION.....\$83 MILLION
- PRIMARY ROADS.....\$23 MILLION
- SECONDARY ROADS.....\$7.7 MILLION
- BRIDGES.....\$22.8 MILLION

"THIS YEAR'S LEGISLATION REPRESENTS A \$47 MILLION INCREASE FOR OUR STATE OVER LAST YEAR," RAHALL POINTED OUT. "IT IS AN INVESTMENT IN WEST VIRGINIA'S FUTURE, AND FOR EACH \$1 WE SPEND IN TAX DOLLARS FOR THIS PROGRAM, WE RECEIVE IN RETURN, \$1.84," CONGRESSMAN RAHALL OBSERVED.

WITH REGARD TO THE 5¢ GAS TAX CONTAINED IN THIS MEASURE, CONGRESSMAN RAHALL SAID, "I BELIEVE THIS IS A FAIR AND PRUDENT APPROACH TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM OF DETERIORATING ROADS, BUT MOST OF ALL, WITH THE PROBLEM OF UNEMPLOYMENT THAT WE CANNOT LET GET MUCH WORSE."

THE LONG-TERM BENEFITS ARE STILL ON WEST VIRGINIA'S SIDE, RAHALL BELIEVES: "AS BRIDGE AND ROADS ARE BUILT AND REPAIRED, MORE STEEL WILL BE PRODUCED CALLING FOR MORE COAL AND MEANING MORE JOBS FOR WEST VIRGINIA," CONGRESSMAN RAHALL CONCLUDED.