

News  
From \_\_\_\_\_

CONGRESSMAN

# Nick Rahall

WEST VIRGINIA-4th DISTRICT

GOOD AFTERNOON AND WELCOME TO THIS SYMPOSIUM ON ACID RAIN, WHICH IS BEING SPONSORED BY THE CONGRESSIONAL COAL GROUP. THE PURPOSE OF THIS MEETING IS TO PROVIDE MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, THEIR STAFFS AND OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES WITH ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON THE CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF ACID PRECIPITATION AND THE IMPACT PROPOSED REGULATORY PROGRAMS SEEKING TO PLACE NEW CONTROLS ON COAL-FIRED POWERPLANTS WOULD HAVE ON CONSUMERS OF ELECTRICITY AND EMPLOYMENT.

THE ISSUES RAISED DURING CONSIDERATION OF ANY PROPOSAL DEALING WITH ACID PRECIPITATION CONTROL ARE EXTREMELY IMPORTANT FROM BOTH AN ENVIRONMENTAL AND CONSUMER POINT-OF-VIEW. HOWEVER, DUE TO THE GREAT DEAL OF UNCERTAINTY WHICH STILL SURROUNDS OUR DISCUSSION OF THE CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF ACID PRECIPITATION, I BELIEVE THAT AS WE LOOK AT THESE PROPOSALS THERE ARE PROVEN CONSUMER IMPACTS AND AS YET UNPROVEN ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS. IN OTHER WORDS, WE KNOW THAT ENACTMENT OF LEGISLATION WHICH WOULD MANDATE A 10 MILLION TON REDUCTION OF SULFUR DIOXIDE EMISSIONS OVER A 10 YEAR PERIOD WOULD COST CONSUMERS BILLIONS OF DOLLARS ALONG WITH TAKING A TOLL ON JOBS IN THE MINING COMMUNITY. YET, WE DO NOT KNOW WHETHER SUCH A PROGRAM WOULD IN FACT REDUCE LEVELS OF ACIDITY IN RAIN FALLING IN NEW ENGLAND. IF WE IGNORE THIS UNCERTAINTY, WE MAY CONTROL THE WRONG THING AT THE WRONG PLACE IN THE WRONG WAY. WHAT WE WOULD HAVE CREATED WOULD BE NOTHING LESS THAN A MULTI-BILLION DOLLAR POLICY FIASCO.

FOR THIS REASON, I BELIEVE THAT THE CONGRESS SHOULD NOT ACCEPT ANY ACID RAIN PROPOSAL WITHOUT THE BENEFIT OF MORE COMPLETE SCIENTIFIC DATA ON ITS CAUSES AND EFFECTS. SCIENCE, AND NOT EMOTION, MUST GUIDE OUR DELIBERATIONS. WITH THIS SAID, I AM PLEASED THAT WE HAVE WITH US TODAY DR. VOLKER MOHNEN, DIRECTOR OF THE ATMOSPHERIC SCIENCES RESEARCH CENTER AT THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK, WHO WILL DISCUSS ACID RAIN FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY.

ALSO MAKING PRESENTATIONS THIS AFTERNOON ARE KATHLEEN BENNETT, ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR FOR AIR, NOISE AND RADIATION OF THE EPA; SAM HALL, WHO WILL OUTLINE THE IMPACTS AN ACID RAIN CONTROL PROGRAM WOULD HAVE ON ELECTRIC UTILITY CUSTOMERS, FROM THE AMERICAN ELECTRIC POWER SYSTEM; AND, MIKE BUCKNER AND CHARLES GRIMM WITH THE UNITED MINE WORKERS OF AMERICA, WHO WILL DISCUSS EMPLOYMENT IMPLICATIONS OF THE ACID RAIN CONTROL PROPOSALS.