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CONGRESSMAN

# Nick Rahall

WEST VIRGINIA-4th DISTRICT

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## RAHALL PUSHES CONGRESSIONAL ACTION ON RAIL RATES

Washington D.C. --- Observing that, "More and more coal mines are being closed and miners put out of work," West Virginia's Fourth District Congressman Nick J. Rahall, has repeated his calls for Congressional Oversight Hearings on the Railroad Deregulation Act of 1980, and into the causes and effects of higher coal hauling rates. "Coal prices are no longer competitive, in some cases," Rahall stated, "because of railroad coal hauling rates."

In a letter to Representative James Florio, (D-NJ), chairman of the House Subcommittee on Commerce and Transportation, Congressman Rahall cited the recent termination of an A.T. Massey Coal Company contract for 400,000 tons of coal per year to New England Electric, because of "excessive" coal hauling rates by the railroads.

"250 coal miners will be put out of work because of this action," Rahall stressed, "in an area where the unemployment rate already nears 40 percent."

Rahall explained the need for Congressional Oversight Hearings; "The Interstate Commerce Commission is currently not carrying out the intent of Congress in relation to the protections set down in the Rail Act for so-called captive shippers---like coal mines that have no other alternative than rail for the movement of their coal."

Congressman Rahall was the author of an amendment to the Rail Act of 1980, that was designed to protect coal mines from being charged excessive rates for the hauling of coal.

"It seems to me that the railroads may be killing any future potential coal has to be a more dominant energy source in this country," Rahall stated, "and in turn, they may also be destroying the economic stability of coal regions like southern West Virginia."

"Too many families are suffering because of the depressed state of the coal industry, and I cannot sit back and watch it happen. The time is now to act, to pump life back into coal and the benefits it brings to our State and Nation," Congressman Rahall concluded.