

# news from ... Congressman Nick Rahall

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CONTACT: Jerry Burkot

202-225-3452

## Rahall Announces Mining Subcommittee Hearing

Washington, D.C. -- Fourth District Rep. Nick Rahall (D-WV) today announced that his Subcommittee on Mining and Natural Resources will conduct a hearing on the threat to the viability of the metallurgical coal industry posed by the reduction in domestic coke production capacity.

"My district in southern West Virginia is responsible for some 25% of the Nation's metallurgical coal used by coke plants. Coke is an essential ingredient in steelmaking," Rahall pointed out. "However, in recent years, domestic coke production has dramatically decreased while coke imports have skyrocketed."

The hearing will focus on the national security ramifications of a shortfall in domestic coke supply, the impact on metallurgical coal production due to coke oven closures and increased coke imports, reasons associated with difficulty in maintaining coke production capacity, and technological processes to enhance the production of coke and iron.

"I find that it is something of a paradox that Japan, a fuel have-not, should be supplying coke to the U.S. which has abundant coal reserves," Rahall stated. "It seems to me that the future of viability of the metallurgical coal industry is tied to the ability to produce coke in this country. This hearing is intended to receive information from experts in this field to formulate a policy aimed at averting a crisis caused by a shortfall in domestic coke capacity."

The date, time, and location of the hearing, along with a list of witnesses will be announced shortly.

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