

*Gerry File*

# news from ... Congressman Nick Rahall

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## Rahall Applauds Customs - Civil Air Patrol Agreement

Washington, D.C. -- Fourth District Rep. Nick Rahall (D-WV) today applauded an agreement, signed between the U.S. Customs Service, the Air Force and the Civil Air Patrol (CAP), which he said "will continue to demonstrate Customs' confidence in the American public" by drafting the CAP to fight in the war on drugs. Congressman Rahall serves as Commander of the Congressional Squadron of the Civil Air Patrol.

The CAP is the civiliam auxiliary to the Air Force. It consists of 68,000 members who donate their time to help mainly in aerial search and rescue efforts. The CAP has over 6,000 light aircraft that are available to provide their services. "What this agreement does," Rep. Rahall pointed out, "is cost-effectively add much-needed manpower to the fight."

During World War II, the Civil Air Patrol played a major role in watching the U.S. coastline to spot and sink German submarines. Rep. Rahall, likening the drug war to WWII, said, "Ten years ago we were in the Munich phase of this fight where the traffickers were appeased. We have now entered the London Blitz phase, where we are fighting back. I am hopeful that with additions to the drug war like this agreement we will soon find ourselves at the Normandy phase."

The CAP will be utilized by Customs on searching for contraband laden vessels and aircraft attempting to illegally enter the U.S. and locating clandestine airstrips used by smugglers. The detection of smugglers is one of Customs' most challenging tasks, according to Customs Commissioner William von Raab. Once CAP detects smugglers, notification can be made to Customs officers who will act to apprehend. Commissioner von Raab said that under no circumstances will CAP be used for hot pursuit to perform enforcement functions.

The Customs - CAP agreement was initiated by the Commander of the CAP, Brigadier General William B. Cass, who first offered the assistance of his force in July of 1985. In subsequent meetings, a Memorandum of Understanding was drawn up by Commissioner von Raab, Brigadier General Cass and Colonel John T. Massingale, Jr., Commander of CAP-USAF.