

STATEMENT OF  
HON. NICK J. RAHALL, II  
H.R. 3011 - INTERIOR APPROPRIATION FY 86

Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of H.R. 3011, the Interior Appropriations bill for fiscal year 1986.

I really want to express my appreciation to the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Interior, Sidney Yates for the responsible levels of funding being recommended for the Bureau of Mines, the Office of Surface Mining's state AML grant program and for the Clean Coal Technology program to be administered by the Department of Energy. In this regard, I would especially like to thank Subcommittee Members Jack Murtha, Joe McDade and Ralph Regula.

I am especially pleased that the Committee has seen fit to appropriate \$36.1 million for the Health and Safety Technology program within the Bureau of Mines and \$13 million for Mining Technology. The specifics contained in the Committee Report as to how this funding should be used, in my view as the chairman of the authorizing subcommittee, are highly commendable.

The State Reclamation Grant Program under the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund administered by OSM is a matter of great concern to my State of West Virginia. It is my understanding that due to

a concern of the Subcommittee Chairman, the gentleman from Illinois, language has been inserted into the legislation to guide the distribution of the \$186.2 million state AML grant appropriation. This language would prohibit any state from receiving fiscal year 1986 AML construction grant funds if that state's unobligated construction grant balance from fiscal years 1982 through 1985 exceeds the amount of its fiscal year 1985 construction grant and is directed at those states which have not used their AML funds in a timely manner.

I am pleased to note that West Virginia has perhaps the best track record in obligating its AML construction grants and, as such, would not be affected by this provision. The amount of West Virginia's unobligated construction grants from fiscal years 1982 through 1984 is below the amount the state received in fiscal year 1985. As such, the state will be in the position, when OSM considers its fiscal year 1986 grant, to receive the full amount requested for eligible projects.

Another important element of the effort to reclaim abandoned coal mine lands is the Rural Abandoned Mine Program. While I continue to advocate a minimum of \$15 million per year for RAMP, the Committee's inclusion of 9.4 million is far better than the Administration's request to essentially kill the program.



Like a phoenix rising from the ashes of failure, the measure before us today contains a \$750 million transfer of funds from the Synthetic Fuels Corporation to the Department of Energy for the Clean Coal Technology Reserve. This program was authorized as part of the Continuing Appropriation for fiscal year 1985 and the decision by the Committee to now provide the actual funds is commendable. Of the total appropriation, \$100 million would be made available for FY 86 with \$300 million in FY 87 and \$350 million in FY 88 to fund various clean coal technologies with the federal share not to exceed 50% of a given project's cost.

Under this provision, DOE must issue a request for proposals within 90 days of enactment and then move into the contracting process.

A great deal of emphasis is being placed on the utility applications of the technologies which may receive clean coal funding. In my view, DOE should focus on funding those technologies which would replace smokestack scrubbers, the dominant pollution control method in use today. Scrubbers are a technological dinosaur. They are inefficient and create pollution themselves in the form of sludge. With proper funding, commercial applications of fluidized bed combustion technology will prove to be more economical and environmentally sound than scrubbers. Fluidized bed combustion, I believe, is the cutting edge in clean coal technology for utility applications and should be the next generation of utility boilers.

At the same time, there are industrial applications of clean coal technology in great need of assistance, primarily those which would lead to a cleaner and more efficient method of producing coke for the steel-making process. The Nation is currently faced with a shortfall in domestic coke production due to the inability of our coke ovens to comply with environmental standards. New technology in this area would not only assist the resurrection of our domestic steel industry, but improve conditions in the metallurgical coal-fields of this Nation, such as those in southern West Virginia.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3011 as reported by the Committee.