

news from ... Congressman Nick Rahall

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 1, 1985

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House Passes Interior Appropriation, Coal Industry Funds Included

Washington, D.C. -- Fourth District Rep. Nick Rahall (D-WV) announced that the House of Representatives had passed an appropriations bill for the Department of the Interior containing funding for many programs vital to the coal industry.

"Appropriated in this bill were funding for the Bureau of Mines, the Office of Surface Mining's State Abandoned Mine Lands grant program, and for the Clean Coal Technology program to be administered by the Department of Energy," Rep. Rahall said.

Speaking on the floor of the House in support of the bill, Rahall said, "I am especially pleased that the Appropriations 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 A.M.L. state grant of \$186.2 million carried a contingency that would prohibit any state from receiving Fiscal Year 1986 A.M.L. construction grant funds if that state's unobligated construction grant balance from Fiscal Year 1982 through 1985 exceeds the amount of its Fiscal Year 1985 construction grant and is directed at those states which have not used their funds in a timely manner.

"I am pleased to note that West Virginia has perhaps the best track record in obligating its A.M.L. construction grants and, as such, would not be affected by this provision," Rahall pointed out. "The state will be in the position, when O.S.M. considers its Fiscal Year 1986 grant, to receive the full amount requested for eligible projects."

"I am also pleased to see that the House has passed responsible levels of funding for Clean Coal Technology. Coal is the energy source of the future and we must continue to research ways in which we can burn our coal in a cleaner, more efficient manner," Rahall added.

The bill will now go to the Senate for their consideration.