

TAPE FOR WEEK OF MARCH 10

THIS IS YOUR CONGRESSMAN NICK RAHALL.

LAST WEEK, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES PASSED LEGISLATION WHICH WILL HAVE A PROFOUND EFFECT ON HEALTH CARE CENTERS ALL ACROSS OUR STATE. THE PRIMARY CARE BLOCK GRANT SYSTEM WAS ABOLISHED BY THE HOUSE. THIS BLOCK GRANT WAS A DEAD DOG FOR OUR STATE AND WE ARE WELL RID OF IT.

WEST VIRGINIA EXPERIMENTED WITH THIS SYSTEM AND REFUNDED THE GRANT TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AFTER ONLY EIGHT MONTHS. THE REASON WAS SIMPLE -- THE STATE WAS LOSING MONEY. AS I TOLD MY COLLEAGUES DUEING THE DEBATE, WEST VIRGINIA'S PROPORTION OF FUNDS FOR HEALTH CENTERS INCREASED BY MORE THAN TWO MILLION DOLLARS AFTER WE GAVE UP ON THIS SYSTEM.

HEALTH CARE IS VERY IMPORTANT TO ME AND CRUCIAL TO THE PEOPLE OF OUR GREAT STATE, PARTICULARLY IN THE RURAL AREAS. MANY OF OUR PEOPLE HAVE BECOME DEPENDENT ON THESE CENTERS AS THEIR ONLY SOURCE OF MEDICAL CARE AND IT IS MY OBLIGATION TO WORK TO ENSURE THAT THESE CENTERS ARE ADEQUATELY FUNDED. I FEEL THAT WE TOOK A MAJOR STEP IN THIS DIRECTION AND YOU CAN BE SURE THAT I WILL CONTINUE TO WORK TOWARD THE GOAL OF ADEQUATE, AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE FOR ALL.

THIS IS YOUR CONGRESSMAN NICK RAHALL.