

News
From _____

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RAHALL'S FEDERAL COAL EXPORT COMMISSION TO TACKLE MAJOR PROBLEMS

Washington, D.C. -- U.S. Rep. Nick Rahall (D-WV) today addressed the first meeting of the Federal Coal Export Commission. The Commission was established pursuant to Rahall's legislation enacted by Congress last year in an attempt to tackle the problems facing U.S. coal exporters by increasing the cooperation and coordination of the various federal government and private sector entities with an interest in coal.

"The fact that such a Commission has been established will not go unnoticed in the international coal markets," Rahall stated. "The U.S. federal government is finally showing the world that it is committed to maintaining and increasing the U.S. market share of international coal demand."

The Federal Coal Export Commission is comprised of thirty members and is organized under the auspices of the Secretary of Commerce. Of the membership, ten seats are reserved for federal government agencies and twenty seats are provided for representatives of the private sector with an interest in U.S. coal exports. Among the representatives of the private sector are coal exporters, coal labor, coal transporters, and financial institutions with an interest in U.S. export coal.

West Virginians A. Michael Perry of the First Huntington National Bank and W.R. "Dewey" Miller, Vice President of Cannelton Industries have been appointed to the Commission.

In his remarks, Rahall said that the primary goals of the Commission are to maintain and increase the U.S. share of the world market by facilitating diplomatic channels to promote U.S. coal export and by examining existing and innovative methods of financing this activity. He also said that emphasis is to be given on the need for an examination of

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how U.S. economic assistance programs could help U.S. coal exports to developing nations which are fast becoming some of the best metallurgical coal markets, as well as increasing the involvement of small and medium sized coal producers in the export coal trade.

"I do not want to see created just another exercise in federal bureaucracy, compiling just another report that would be filed away on some dusty shelf," Rahall told the Commissioners. "In order to make sure the government people have a better handle on what the private sector needs, I stacked the Commission with representatives of industry in a two-to-one ratio."

Rahall noted: "Some of the best and the brightest in the coal export business are sitting in this room, and all interested parties are represented. There is no doubt in my mind that together, we will tackle the problems facing the coal export industry."