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CONGRESSMAN

# Nick Rahall

WEST VIRGINIA-4th DISTRICT

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## SOUTH AFRICAN "MINERALS STRANGLEHOLD" MUST BE BROKEN SAYS RAHALL

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- U.S. Rep. Nick J. Rahall (D-WV) today warned that the U.S. must intensify efforts into weaning itself of an undue reliance on South African minerals if the Nation is to avoid jeopardizing its defense and industrial security as well as strengthen its commitment to human rights in that country.

"We will never free ourselves from the Apartheid Regime's minerals stranglehold unless alternative supplies and substitute materials are developed," Rahall stated during a hearing conducted by the Subcommittee on Mining and Natural Resources, which he chairs, on the dependency of the U.S. on strategic and critical minerals from South Africa.

"We will never be effective in supporting the freedom movement in South Africa unless all loopholes are removed from our sanctions law. Because if these actions are not taken, I fear that our human rights concerns will go unheeded by a government smug in the knowledge that our moral outrage stops short of our economic interests," Chairman Rahall said.

The Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986 exempted from its sanctions certain minerals which the U.S. currently cannot obtain from reliable and secure sources. Among these minerals are chromium and manganese used in steelmaking and platinum used in automobile pollution control systems. Exempted minerals also have high technology applications.

According to Rahall, available options to cause these South African minerals to lose their essentiality include fostering alternative supply sources domestically and abroad, the development of substitute materials, recycling, conservation and stockpiling.

"The issue of substitution has often been given a somewhat cursory consideration by policymakers," Rahall said. "Yet, time and time again the old adage that necessity is the mother of invention has been proven true. I cannot help but to think it has some application here, especially in light of the strides being made to develop substitute materials for cobalt, such as ceramics, begun after prices skyrocketed and supplies become tight when Zaire was invaded by dissidents operating out of Angola in 1978."

Rahall noted that he will use information presented during the hearing to develop suitable recommendations on pursuing appropriate actions to reduce U.S. dependency on South African minerals.