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CONGRESSMAN

# Nick Rahall

WEST VIRGINIA-4th DISTRICT

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## RAHALL TAKES THE STAND FOR ARC AND EDA

WASHINGTON - U.S. Rep. Nick Rahall (D-W.Va.) once again stepped to bat and helped to score the winning run for the Appalachian Regional Commission against an administration effort to cancel funding for the agency that has helped West Virginia improve its health, education and highway systems.

Speaking in favor of H.R. 2686, the Public Works and Economic Development Act and Appalachian Regional Development Act Amendments of 1987, Rahall stressed that the current administration has advocated the termination of both the Appalachian Regional Commission and the Economic Development Administration, two agencies Rahall called essential to the welfare of American society. The bill passed the House 330-89.

"The way to ensure the strength of our nation is to ensure that its foundation is solid and strong," Rahall said. "In order to accomplish that goal we must take special care to see that this country's truly underdeveloped and less fortunate communities are nurtured to stimulate economic growth and development. When this occurs, these areas will become self-sufficient and capable of contributing to the nation as a whole."

Rahall cited West Virginia as an example of a region ignored by the administration and left behind to fend dangerous waters alone. "In my home State, the unemployment level remains inordinately high and the industrial base continues to erode," Rahall commented. "At the same time, many areas in the country are enjoying a period of prosperity. The programs in H.R. 2686 are vital not only to us in West Virginia, but to the welfare of the nation as we work to strengthen America's foundations and infrastructure."

The Congressman also defended the Economic Development Authority stating that its number one priority is the creation of jobs - an important measure in West Virginia, a state with high unemployment. Specifically, Rahall mentioned the use of small business incubators and industrial parks aided by the EDA as ways to help young businesses remain in operation.

"I am actively exploring the use of the business incubator in my congressional district with local leaders and business people," Rahall said. "Currently pending before the EDA are applications by the cities of Huntington and Beckley for assistance with such an incubator."

An incubator provides for the collective use of clerical and accounting personnel, office machinery and warehouse space by fledgling businesses with little capital. The other program administered by the EDA to help young businesses provides for the creation of industrial parks in which the concept of sharing resources is similar to the incubator system.

"Small industries share water, sewer and electrical facilities, thereby reducing costs and increasing their chances of long-term success," Rahall commented. "This program has been extremely successful in Mercer County and we in West Virginia continue to push the option for other needy areas."

Rahall added that H.R. 2686 extends the highway and non-highway programs of the Appalachian Regional Commission for three years and is in line with policies adopted by the Appalachian Governors to address the current problems of the Region and the need for expanded development activities. Also included in the bill is a provision allowing the use of ARC funds to assist in the development of business incubators. Additionally, funding for the EDA along with the highway and non-highway program of the ARC are extended for three years, through Fiscal Year 1990.