

News
From _____

CONGRESSMAN

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Nick Rahall

WEST VIRGINIA-4th DISTRICT

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RAHALL TELLS ADMINISTRATION TO MAKE UP ITS MIND ON ACID RAIN

Washington, D.C. -- Conflicting reports of the Administration's stance on acid rain legislation could seriously undermine the President during his summit conference with Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney in Ottawa next month, according to U.S. Rep. Nick Rahall (D-WV).

"It is being reported that the President will ask Congress for more clean coal technology funding in an effort to show the Canadians that the U.S. intends to pursue the recommendations made last year by the U.S.-Canadian special envoys on acid rain, and I strongly support this approach," Rahall said. "Then, at the same time, Energy Secretary Herrington testified before Congress that the Administration may be rethinking its opposition to acid rain control legislation. Statements such as this could seriously undermine the President at the summit."

The acid rain issue is expected to be a major point of contention between the two leaders at the April 5-6 summit. The President has been reported as leaning toward asking Congress for more clean coal technology funding as a way to diffuse the issue. However, during a March 17 appearance before a House committee, Energy Secretary Herrington said that while he is supportive of the special envoy's recommendations, the Administration may be "evolving" towards control legislation.

"The special envoy's recommendation was that the U.S. should commit to a major program to support clean coal technology projects and I see no reason why the Administration should even consider changing its position at this time," Rahall pointed out. "These new technologies will enable coal to be burned in a more efficient and environmentally sound manner and their commercialization would not create hardships among the American public as an acid rain control bill would."

"This confusion within the Administration is unfortunately all too characteristic of their approach on so many vital issues. Such confusion would seem to explain how fiascos, such as the Iran/Contra mess, come to fruition," Rahall added.

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