

RAHALL SAYS HUD-INDEPENDENT AGENCIES BILL TO GREATLY AID WEST VIRGINIA

WASHINGTON - Today's passage of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Independent Appropriations for fiscal year 1988 was called by Rep. Nick Rahall (D-W.Va.) a great aid to West Virginia.

Included in the bill for West Virginia is \$43.4 million for funding of a clinical addition project at the Huntington Veterans Administration Medical Center (VAMC); funding for the Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG) program; and appropriations for the Environmental Protection Agency.

During debate of the bill, Rahall said, "It was my privilege to testify before the Appropriations Subcommittee on HUD-Independent Agencies on the need for funding of the Huntington VAMC. The funding in this bill will go a long way toward addressing the pressing needs of the 144,000 veterans from West Virginia, Ohio and Kentucky who are served by the Huntington VAMC."

Rahall also cited the importance of the UDAG program to West Virginia cities and added that the program is uniquely able to target economic development assistance to distressed areas with special needs and has proven effective as a tool for the revitalization of depressed areas.

"The City of Huntington is seeking UDAG funding for its premier development site, dubbed the Super Block," Rahall stated. "The Super Block would consist of shopping areas, gallery space, office and apartment complexes and hotel space. The development of Super Block is crucial to the revitalization of Huntington, the largest city in West Virginia, and would not be feasible without UDAG funding."

On the environment, Rahall said the EPA's construction grants program is of great importance to many West Virginia communities.

"This program provides grants to state, local and regional governmental entities for the planning, design and construction of wastewater treatment facilities," Rahall said. "There are many areas that to this day do not have adequate wastewater treatment facilities that many of us take for granted."

The measure now goes to the Senate for consideration.