

News  
From \_\_\_\_\_

CONGRESSMAN

  
**Nick Rahall**

WEST VIRGINIA-4th DISTRICT

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**RAHALL SEEKS TO COUNTER CANADIAN ACID RAIN PROPAGANDA**

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- U.S. REP. NICK J. RAHALL (D-WV) TODAY INTRODUCED LEGISLATION AIMED AT COUNTERING A CANADIAN GOVERNMENT MEDIA CAMPAIGN DEvised TO CONVINCE U.S. TOURISTS VISITING CANADA THAT THEIR GOVERNMENT IS NOT ADDRESSING THE "ACID RAIN" ISSUE.

THE TEXT OF THE REP. RAHALL'S HOUSE FLOOR STATEMENT IN INTRODUCING THE "UNITED STATES - CANADIAN ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION RECIPROCITY ACT" FOLLOWS:

Mr. Speaker. Canada is, without a doubt, a nice place to visit. In fact, this is a message often broadcasted into our homes courtesy of the Canadian Government's tourism campaign on television. Visions of wilderness landscapes, historic places and interesting people flash across our screens as we are told of the excitement in store for U.S. families visiting Canada this summer.

There is, however, another Canadian media campaign in the works aimed at U.S. tourists once they get to Canada. Canada's environment minister, the Honorable Tom McMillan, has announced that his government will use billboards, magazines and radio advertising to convince folks from this country visiting Canada that our federal government is not doing enough to address the "acid rain" issue.

It can be expected that this Canadian government media campaign will have a certain bias against those existing programs in the United States which are, in fact, successfully reducing powerplant emissions which may potentially contribute to instances of acidic deposition. Under the Clean Air Act, significant progress has been made in improving air quality. For example, sulfur dioxide ambient air quality levels improved by 37% between 1977 and 1986.

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Pursuant to the Clean Air Act, coal burning powerplants constructed since 1978 are required to install smokestack scrubbers in an effort to obtain a continued downward decline in emission rates. While perhaps not a necessary prerequisite for achieving compliance with ambient air quality standards from plants burning low-sulfur coal, this technical means for emission reduction is especially effective for those powerplants which utilize higher sulfur content coals. And for the future, we have initiated a Clean Coal Technology program to devise new techniques to enhance coal burning processes.

In Canada, however, there are no federally enforceable standards for sulfur dioxide and not a single electric utility coal fired powerplant is equipped with a smokestack scrubber.

For this reason, today I am introducing the "United States - Canadian Environmental Information Reciprocity Act of 1988." This bill would require the posting of a sign at every U.S. - Canadian border crossing with the following message:

WELCOME BACK TO THE UNITED STATES,  
LAND OF 142 POWERPLANT SMOKESTACK SCRUBBERS.  
DID YOU SEE A SINGLE ONE IN CANADA?

The idea for this sign came from Allen Wampler, the assistant energy for fossil energy at the Department of Energy, in commenting on the fact that billboards in Canada implore U.S. tourists to have their government do more to combat "acid rain."

It only stands to reason that when U.S. citizens are being subjected to a foreign government's media campaign, the political ramifications of such a tactic should be noted by the United States government. This is the premise for the legislation I am introducing.