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CONGRESSMAN

# Nick Rahall

WEST VIRGINIA-4th DISTRICT

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## PROPOSED U.S.-CANADA FREE TRADE AGREEMENT TO BE SUBJECT OF RAHALL HEARING

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- U.S. Rep. Nick J. Rahall (D-WV), chairman of the Subcommittee on Mining and Natural Resources, today announced that he has scheduled a hearing on the potential effects of the proposed U.S.-Canada Free Trade Agreement on domestic mining and natural resources. The hearing will be held on March 10, 1988, in Washington, D.C.

"One of my primary areas of concern is how this proposed agreement, if implemented, would affect U.S. coal production and employment," Rahall said. "Over the past few years we have witnessed increased levels of Canadian power being imported into this country. My fear is that the agreement may throw the flood gates completely open and further displace coal use in northeastern electric utility markets."

Because of its energy provisions, Rahall noted that West Virginia has a big stake in the proposed agreement. Along with coal, West Virginia oil and gas production may also be impacted.

"There is a great deal of interest and concern being expressed within not only the mining industry but by various labor organizations as well over this proposed agreement," Rahall said. "However, there are many unanswered questions and I think the hearing will assist in obtaining the type of information that will be necessary for Congressional deliberations on the proposal later this year."