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RAHALL SAYS VAMC ACCESS ROAD PROBLEM MAY BE RESOLVED

WASHINGTON - U.S. Rep. Nick Rahall (D-W.Va.) today announced a possible resolution to the holdup in the construction of a second access road to the Huntington Veterans Administration Medical Center. The creation of an access road to the center has been at a standstill because an earlier plan called for the road to cross private property. The new plan does not involve crossing privately owned land.

"There is no question that the proposed \$47.5 million expansion project cannot proceed efficiently and effectively without the addition of another access road to the center," Rahall said. "The expansion project will soon be upon us and I want the access road to be available to handle the additional traffic."

In response to the Congressman's request for information on a remedy, VAMC Director Timothy B. Williams stated in a January 29, 1988 reply, that the VAMC plan is "to maintain only one access point from Spring Valley Road and construct the second roadway from a fork approximately 800 feet up the current entrance road. The reduced speeds on this road coupled with explicit signage will assist drivers in deciding which road to use. This alternative will meet all the needs of the medical center and reduce the risk of traffic accidents to those using the road."

In response to the proposal, Rahall stated, "This alternative relieves the Park Board of any responsibility in the matter and actually increases the utility of already owned federal property. The plan therefore, is a savings to both the federal government and taxpayers."

"I hope this decision on part of the VAMC will resolve the issue so the road can be built," Rahall stated. "We cannot dawdle on this important project which will greatly affect the economy of our area and the needed services to our veterans."