

Keep Nick Rahall in Congress Committee

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RAHALL TO FILE THURSDAY FOR RE-ELECTION

Beckley, W. Va. -- U.S. Rep. Nick Rahall (D-WV) will file his candidacy papers for re-election to a seventh term the U.S. House of Representatives at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 28, in the Secretary of State's office in Charleston.

"It has been my privilege to serve the people of the Fourth District for almost twelve years now, and I am looking forward to continuing to build upon the solid foundation of progress we have laid," Rahall said. "Experience is a great teacher and I have spent eleven years in the classroom of Congress, and I have learned a great deal. A solid relationship has developed with the people of southern West Virginia who, as always, remain my first and foremost concern."

During his tenure in the House, Rahall has become a ranking member of two committees vital to Appalachia -- the House Interior Committee and the House Public Works and Transportation Committee. Rahall is chairman of the Interior Subcommittee on Mining and Natural Resources, the key coal committee in the House. Rahall is also founder and chairman of the Congressional Coal Group.

In recent years, Rahall has looked beyond coal as West Virginia's source of sustenance. Toward that end, Rahall won a spot on the Public Works and Transportation Subcommittee on Economic Development, from which he has embarked upon a path toward economic diversification in southern West Virginia. This past year, Rahall held successful economic development seminars in southern West Virginia Counties, and hopes to do the same throughout his district in the months ahead.

"My economic development seminars were a big success," Rahall noted. "These communities came together, united in their desire to rebuild their faltering economies, and have begun to lay that solid foundation toward real progress. I believe that this can be done throughout southern West Virginia."

Rahall has also touted the state's tourism magnetism as another potentially lucrative industry upon which to expand. In 1987, the House of Representatives passed Rahall's bill to grant federal status to segments of the Gauley, Bluestone and Meadow Rivers. "What I am attempting to establish is an integrated network of state and federal park units in our area that will be accessible by interstate highways, as well as by the New River Parkway for which I included funding in last year's highway bill," Rahall pointed out. "These river segments will be the glue that binds these parks together, with the New River Gorge National River as the backbone." Rahall also cited the scheduled completion next summer of Interstate 64 as another means of enhancing this proposal.

While Rahall has focused his energies on economic development in the present, Rahall has also cast an eye toward the future and how the youth of



today is prepared for the 21st century. "I have formed an advisory committee, chaired by Dr. Dale Nitzschke, president of Marshall University, to study the educational system in West Virginia and what can be done to improve it," Rahall said. "Education has become an annual target of the Reagan budget knife, yet this is the area I feel encompasses our greatest and brightest hopes for the future. Our greatest natural resource is the minds of our young people, our future leaders. Our greatest long-term national security asset lies not in misguided missiles, but in our children and grandchildren and the generations to follow. It is our responsibility to prepare them properly for that future."

Rahall, however, stressed that the state of the coal industry will continue to weigh heavily in his priorities. "Coal is still our bread-and-butter," Rahall said, "but we have to realize that we may never again reach the heights we once enjoyed. Nevertheless, I will still leave no stone unturned in my efforts to put every one of our unemployed coal miners back to work."

Rahall has a full agenda of legislation to aid the coal industry pending before his subcommittee, and plans to push for their prompt consideration before the full House. "I will continue to push for a tariff on imported coal, a reduction in rail rates for captive shippers of coal, prompt black lung settlements, and, of course, the continued fight for safer mining conditions for our coal miners," Rahall vowed.

"I am eager to put my record of service to the people of West Virginia before them for their consideration," Rahall stated. "I have confidence in their ability to make a fair and unbiased judgement as to my efforts on their behalf."