

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

CONGRESSMAN

# Nick Rahall

WEST VIRGINIA-4th DISTRICT

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
MARCH 4, 1988**

**CONTACT: JIM ZOIA  
(202) 226-7761**

## **RAHALL RECOMMENDS FUNDING INCREASES FOR FEDERAL MINE HEALTH & SAFETY RESEARCH PROGRAMS**

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- U.S. Rep. Nick J. Rahall (D-WV) today announced that his Subcommittee on Mining and Natural Resources is recommending \$46 million over the Reagan Administration's fiscal year 1989 budget request for the Bureau of Mines.

The majority of this increase would be directed to the Bureau's Health, Safety and Mining Technology programs. The Administration is proposing a 26% budget reduction in this area, primarily for occupational health and mine disaster prevention research. Rahall is also recommending an increase in the budget for the Bureau's Environmental Technology programs.

"The whole scale gutting of these Bureau research activities is not warranted by the continued high level of human risk associated with mining in terms of fatalities and injuries," Rahall stated. As the chairman of the Subcommittee on Mining and Natural Resources, Rahall is responsible for congressional oversight of Bureau of Mines programs and making recommendations on its budget to the House Budget Committee.

Among areas of concern to Rahall in the Health, Safety and Mining Technology program where increased budget authority is being recommended are:

- \* Respirable dust prevention research to reduce the incidence and severity of black lung disease.
- \* The development of improved carbon monoxide detection and noise reduction techniques.
- \* Research to provide for enhanced fire detection systems and methane removal.
- \* The development of a self-contained-self-rescuer unit that is small and light enough to be belt wearable.
- \* Research to improve the design of equipment associated with haulage and materials handling.

"The goal of this type of research is to make underground coal mines as safe as possible for the men and women who extract the Nation's coal supply," Rahall said.

In the area of Environmental Technology, Rahall recommended additional funds for research into techniques to mitigate acid mine drainage and subsidence. The congressman said that the development of techniques to mitigate acidic drainage from old abandoned deep mines continues to be particularly elusive and noted that advances in technologies to prevent subsidence should be of paramount importance.

Under the Subcommittee's recommendations, West Virginia University would continue to receive federal funds for its Generic Center on Respirable Dust and its newly established National Mine Land Reclamation Center.