

News
From _____


CONGRESSMAN

Nick Rahall

WEST VIRGINIA-4th DISTRICT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
SEPTEMBER 30, 1988

CONTACT: JERRY BURKOT
(202) 225-3452

RAHALL ANNOUNCES MAJOR MINERAL FIND IN W.VA.

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- U.S. Rep. Nick J. Rahall (D-WV) today announced that southern West Virginia contains important desposits of the strategic and critical mineral, manganese. Rahall said the West Virginia Geological and Economic Survey briefed staff for his Subcommittee on Mining and Natural Resources on their investigations this week.

"This is perhaps one of the biggest mineral finds in the region since the discovery of the Pocahontas coalfield," said Rahall. "In light of the fact that the United States is almost 100% dependent on imports to meet its manganese requirements, West Virginia is now poised to crack the strategic mineral stranglehold foreign and often politically volatile countries have on us for this essential material."

Manganese is used in the production ^{OF} steel. Without it, widely used steel products simply could not be manufactured and no substitutes for manganese in this application have been found. While small amounts of manganese had been produced in southern West Virginia sporadically until the end of World War II, the extent and quality of the deposits are only now beginning to be understood.

Rahall said the West Virginia Geological Survey has identified a mineralized belt approximately 150 miles long and 5 to 10 miles wide extending through parts of Mercer, Monroe, Greenbrier and Pocahontas Counties.

"This is very high quality manganese and with the data we have, it appears that it would not be difficult to mine. Production of this ore will mean jobs for southern West Virginians while providing a measure of industrial and defense security for our Nation."

According to Rahall, further research needs to be conducted before the deposits can be developed. The West Virginia Geological Survey is proposing to undertake this project and Rahall has pledged his support for the effort.