

As one remedy to this situation, Rahall outlined his proposal to add coke to the National Defense Stockpile maintained by the Department of Defense, an action which would stimulate the demand for 71 to 95 million tons of metallurgical coal, a great deal of which would have to come from southern West Virginia.

Rahall explained that the Stockpile currently contains such strategic and critical minerals as vanadium, chromium and manganese as well as copper, lead and tin for use during times of national emergency.

"From a policy perspective, I think we should all realize that if we stockpile critical minerals such as chromium, and vanadium and manganese which are all used in steelmaking, without adequate supplies of metallurgical coal and coke these stockpiles would be made useless." He added, "While there would be no stainless steel without chromium, there could be no steel in the first place without metallurgical coal and coke."

Rahall said that the ability to produce coke domestically must also be addressed. "The crux of the matter is that existing technology simply cannot bring the industry into compliance with ever more stringent environmental requirements."

"It will only be through new technologies can we seek the revitalization of the domestic metallurgical coal and coke industries and avoid a dramatic coke shortfall in the future," Rahall said in proposing that the Clean Coal Technology program be used to support industrial as well as electric utility applications.

Rahall called on the private sector to initiate applications under the Clean Coal Technology program for new technologies to use coal in steelmaking.

News
From _____

CONGRESSMAN

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AMERICAN COAL MUST BE KEPT IN AMERICAN STEEL RAHALL SAYS

White Sulphur Springs, WV -- There are national security implications associated with the decline in metallurgical coal and coke production capability in the United States, was the message U.S. Rep. Nick J. Rahall (D-WV) delivered today during his keynote address before the 44th annual meeting of the American Coke and Coal Chemicals Institute in White Sulphur Springs.

Metallurgical grade coal is used to produce coke which is an essential ingredient in the steelmaking process. Although southern West Virginia has extensive deposits of high quality metallurgical coal, market conditions in recent years have caused many mines to close. Meanwhile, primarily because of more stringent environmental regulation, steel companies have not built new coke ovens as existing units retire.

Rahall said that with a steady rise in coke demand coupled with the lack of new coke making capability means that the U.S. is headed toward a severe shortfall in domestic coke supplies in the future.

"I believe there are national security implications involved with a shortfall scenerio because it may cause undue reliance on imported coke which in a time of national emergy, such as a war, is not conducive to our defensive posture," Rahall stated.

The Congressman pointed out that in 1987 coke imports tripled over 1986 levels and for the first time outstripped the amount of coke exported by the U.S. "How to keep American coal in American steel is a very real and substantial concern," he said.

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