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#### OUTSIDERS DISTORTING TRUTH TO WEST VIRGINIANS, RAHALL SAYS

HUNTINGTON, W. VA. -- U.S. Rep. Nick Rahall says that national special interest groups are spreading a disinformation campaign in West Virginia in an attempt to defeat civil rights legislation. Rahall's office has been deluged with calls from citizens who have been coaxed through a series of false characterizations about legislation passed overwhelmingly by the Congress and vetoed by the President.

"I am appalled that there are certain national groups who are using a campaign of distorted untruths and false charges to unnecessarily arouse the fears of many West Virginians, who have contacted me regarding the Civil Rights Restoration Act," Rahall said. "A vast majority of them cite completely untrue and reckless charges that they have been fed, and I resent these national groups using the pulpit to stir the fears of our people, who deserve to be told the truth."

H.R. 1214, overturning a controversial Supreme Court decision regarding discrimination by federally-funded institutions, passed both Houses of Congress by overwhelming margins, and has been vetoed by the President. In several churches, a nationally-distributed package of false information regarding the legislation's intent has been distributed to parishioners, urging them to contact their Congressional representatives to support the President's veto of the civil rights legislation.

"I am all for the spreading of information -- provided that we are dealing with the truth," Rahall observed. "After all, it is the right of any group to participate in the national debate. But when outright lies are the basis for rousing the fears of the people, then the line must be drawn. And, in this case, the falsehoods, untruths and distorted characterizations have been the sole basis for the public clamor to support the President."

Some of the misconceptions of the legislation are that it forces schools and churches to hire, as the literature states, "practicing, active homosexual drug addicts with AIDS". "Nothing could be further from the truth," Rahall said. "There is absolutely nothing in this legislation that deals with this ridiculous charge. Employers are free to refuse to hire, or to fire any employee who poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others, as well as an alcoholic or drug addict. This is true under current law, and this legislation in no way changes any current law."

"The only commandment being broken in connection with this legislation is on the part of those who are spreading these lies," Rahall added. "Thou shalt not bear false witness..."