

News
From _____

CONGRESSMAN

Nick Rahall

WEST VIRGINIA-4th DISTRICT

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RAHALL INTRODUCES A.R.C. LEGISLATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- U.S. Rep. Nick Rahall (D-WV) announced today that he is introducing two bills to reauthorize the Appalachian Regional Commission at increased funding and to speed up the development along the Appalachian corridor.

Speaking at a news conference with Governor Gaston Caperton (D-WV) and Senator Jay Rockefeller (D-WV) in Washington, Rahall said that his bill to reauthorize the A.R.C. will increase the funding level to make completion of the Appalachian corridor system possible. "My bill will authorize the A.R.C. at a level of \$185 million per year for the next five years," Rep. Rahall said. "This represents an increase over the FY89 level of \$110 million. Of that amount, \$144 million will be dedicated each year for the corridor system."

Rahall also announced that he will introduce a bill to allow money from the Highway Trust Fund to be used to help finish the Appalachian corridors. "So much progress has been made in completing these very essential roads for us in West Virginia," Rahall pointed out. "It would be a shame to let this project inch along at a snail's pace when we need help soon. Without these funds, our corridor system would not be completed until about the year 2065. With this funding, I am hopeful that we can complete work on this system by the year 2000."

There are 144 miles left to be completed in West Virginia at a cost of approximately \$1.4 billion. "Completion of this system will be a shot in the arm for our economic future," Rahall observed. "With our ever-expanding and diversifying economic base, it is essential that our state be accessible by road for new business to come into West Virginia. Completion of the corridor system will go a long way toward achieving that goal."

Senator Jay Rockefeller will introduce both of these bills in the Senate. "I am looking forward to joining forces with Senator Rockefeller to enact this legislation," Rep. Rahall said. "His support, and of course the support of Governor Caperton, will be key."

In the House these bills will be referred to the Public Works and Transportation Committee. "They will be considered in the Surface Transportation Subcommittee, of which I am the ranking Democratic member," Rahall added.

Rahall will introduce his legislation on Tuesday, February 28.