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RAHALL SAYS WEATHER STATIONS TO CONTINUE OPERATING IN W.VA.

Washington - U.S. Rep. Nick Rahall (D-W.Va.) said today that a decision by the U.S. Department of Commerce to maintain its National Weather Service stations in West Virginia is a wise one that directly affects residents of the Mountain State.

There had been much speculation that due to a \$15 million shortfall expected in Fiscal Year 1990 by the National Weather Service, one or more stations in West Virginia would be closed. At the present time the NWS operates centers in Huntington and Beckley in Rahall's Congressional District, and also in Elkins, Charleston and Parkersburg.

Rahall said that those stations are vital to the well-being of West Virginians and that the services of one office cannot be transferred to another without causing problems.

"Each of the five NWS stations in West Virginia serves as a vital link in our state's civil defense system," Rahall said. "These stations can alert citizens via the media about hazardous weather conditions. They have proven most helpful in the floods of 1977, 1984 and 1985. In the winter months, they provide valuable information that is essential to those who must travel our state's highways. Because of our state's topography, it can be 20 degrees and snowing in Beckley, while in Huntington it may be 50 degrees and sunny. I am glad to see that these stations will be around to serve the people of West Virginia."