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CONGRESSMAN

# Nick Rahall

WEST VIRGINIA-4th DISTRICT

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## RAHALL CALLS FOR PUBLIC MEETING, REAFFIRMS SUPPORT

WASHINGTON, DC -- Rep. Nick J. Rahall, II (D-WV) today called on the West Virginia Department of Highways to hold a public meeting in Huntington about the proposed highway linking Point Pleasant and the interstate system.

"The first meeting was held in April at Point Pleasant to describe the three possible routes, and it is now time to have one that addresses the feasibility of the most logical alternative -- a road down Route 2 and across to Milton," Rahall said.

The Congressman has supplied the Department of Highways with a Marshall University preliminary report, which he requested, outlining the advantages of the Route 2 proposal, and again emphasized to the DOH the advantages of this alternative.

"This plan is significantly more beneficial to the entire region than either of the other proposals," Rahall said. "Already, Goodyear, AKZO Chemicals, and seven other small companies, employing over 1300 people, have located along Route 2 and the 100 acre Kyle Industrial Park is nearly full, exemplifying the potential industrial growth of the area. In addition, APTUS Environmental Services and Apple Grove Pulp Company, together employing as many as 850 West Virginians, are looking at sites on the Ohio; there are two 80-plus acre sites in the Greenbottom-Lesage area, larger tracts away from the river in Mason County, and an undeveloped area north of AKZO chemicals. All of these areas will be prime industrial and manufacturing locations if the highway is built.

"We have the support of a number of organizations, communities, and individuals in the affected areas of Cabell and Mason Counties," Rahall said. "If the DOH wants to truly realize the overwhelming positive impact, as well as the widespread local backing of the project, they will come to Huntington before they make a decision and listen to what these businesses, towns, and residents have to say."

Rahall believes that a July 10 meeting, between the Mayor's office, DOH planners, local government officials, and representatives of the Chamber of Commerce and Region II, Planning and Development demonstrates the strength of support the Route 2 alternative enjoys.

"The Monday meeting in Huntington was a good initial contact between the department and the local interests," Rahall said. "For the DOH to get a complete picture and set of information, they must schedule a full public hearing in Huntington in the near future."

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