

News
From _____

CONGRESSMAN

Nick Rahall

WEST VIRGINIA-4th DISTRICT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FRIDAY, JULY 28, 1989

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RAHALL JOINS FORCES IN HEALTH BATTLE

WASHINGTON, D.C.-- Congressman Nick J. Rahall, II announced today that he will join forces with other Members of the House to enact H.R. 2547, a bill that will repeal the surtax imposed by the Medicare Catastrophic Coverage Act which was intended to pay the costs of the catastrophic medical services for senior citizens on low, fixed incomes.

Rahall also noted that the House Ways and Means Committee this week adopted a change in the surtax under the MEDCAT legislation, reducing it from 15 percent to 5 percent.

"I do not know which version of refinancing the Medicare Catastrophic Coverage Act will reach final enactment. I only know that I have supported the opt-out version of legislation, which was also part of the Ways and Means Committee proposal," said Rahall. "But it should be made clear that this option also mandates that seniors who now voluntarily seek Medicare Part B coverage would have to give up that coverage as well, in order to opt out of the Part A (hospital) catastrophic coverage which requires the surtax.

"The overwhelming majority of my senior constituents have urged me to support H.R. 2547, and that is how I will stand in the future," Rahall added.

"I want my constituents who have written to me by the thousands over the past 7 months to know that the majority still rules, and that is how the Democratic process is intended to work," concluded Rahall. "That is why I am announcing my position on the Medicare Catastrophic Coverage Act."

Rahall stressed that these proposals are only pending, and not yet enacted into law.