

U.S. Congressman
Nick Rahall
WORKING FOR WEST VIRGINIANS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: STEPHEN SPINA

MONDAY, OCTOBER 16, 1989

PHONE: (202) 225-3452

RAHALL URGES GOVERNOR TO CONSIDER MILTON ROUTE

WASHINGTON, D.C.-- In remarks made for the hearing record in the Department of Highways study of possible routes from Point Pleasant, Congressman Nick J. Rahall, II (D-WV) today urged Governor Caperton, Fred VanKirk, and Secretary Dunn to carefully consider all the implications, before making a decision, concerning which corridor would be chosen.

"I want to make sure that they look at all the factors before making a decision," said Rahall. "The cheapest road that can be built is not the right way to decide which route is most beneficial."

Rahall also expressed his concern over the notion that some people are holding to that the Milton route poses to many obstacles. "The route to Charleston has just as many obstacles, if not more, if you really look at it," said Rahall. "Costs would dramatically increase if you took into account all the lost revenue the route would create for farm lands. Some of the most prime farmland in West Virginia would be destroyed if the route to Charleston was built."

Rahall continued that the area for the most potential economic growth should be considered the best route, and as far as he could see that would be the route from Point Pleasant to Milton, down Route 2 to I-64.

"Goodyear Tire and Rubber, Akzo Chemie America, Apple Grove Pulp and Paper, D&E Industries, Blenko Glass, Coopervision Cilco, Transfab-- all of these companies and scores of others exist along Route 2. It would be downright foolish to deny this area, that has proven its growth potential, a chance to expand."

"The road from Point Pleasant to Milton satisfies that need by opening up the Ohio Valley and Eastern Cabell County, allowing these regions, which for decades have been recognized as the prime location for economic expansion in the state, to flourish," said Rahall.

--30--

NICK J. RAHALL II
4TH DISTRICT, WEST VIRGINIA

2104 RAYBURN BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-3452

815 FIFTH AVENUE
HUNTINGTON, WV 25701
(304) 522-NICK

110½ MAIN STREET
BECKLEY, WV 25801
(304) 252-5000

1005 FEDERAL BUILDING
BLUEFIELD, WV 24701
(304) 325-6222

R K BUILDING
LOGAN, WV 25601
(304) 752-4934

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

October 13, 1989

COMMITTEES:
INTERIOR AND INSULAR AFFAIRS

SUBCOMMITTEES:

CHAIRMAN:
MINING AND NATURAL RESOURCES
NATIONAL PARKS AND
PUBLIC LANDS

PUBLIC WORKS AND
TRANSPORTATION

SUBCOMMITTEES:
SURFACE TRANSPORTATION
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

EDUCATION AND LABOR

SUBCOMMITTEE:
ELEMENTARY, SECONDARY
AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

The Honorable Gaston Caperton, III
Governor
State of West Virginia
State Capitol
Charleston, West Virginia 25305

Dear Governor Caperton:

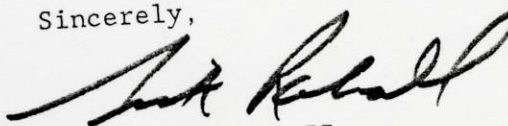
Enclosed please find a copy of the letter I have just sent to Fred VanKirk at the Department of Highways regarding the highway connecting Point Pleasant to the state interstate system.

As I told Commissioner VanKirk, I hope that you, he, and Secretary Dunn will thoughtfully consider the weighted importance of each alternative, rather than just the construction cost bottom line, before making a final determination on the corridor in which the road will be located. If you do, I am confident that, as your own numbers show, you will see that the highway linking Point Pleasant to Eastern Cabell County near Milton will have a tremendously greater impact on needed economic development in the state than any of the alternatives.

Thank you for your cooperation and consideration with this matter, and I avail myself to you for further discussion of it if you so desire. Please do not hesitate to call on me if I can be of assistance to you and the people of West Virginia in any way.

With warmest personal regards, I am

Sincerely,



NICK J. RAHALL, II
Member of Congress

NJR/rsu

Enclosure

NICK J. RAHALL II
4TH DISTRICT, WEST VIRGINIA

2104 RAYBURN BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-3452

815 FIFTH AVENUE
HUNTINGTON, WV 25701
(304) 522-NICK

110½ MAIN STREET
BECKLEY, WV 25801
(304) 252-5000

1005 FEDERAL BUILDING
BLUEFIELD, WV 24701
(304) 325-6222

R K BUILDING
LOGAN, WV 25601
(304) 752-4934

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

October 13, 1989

COMMITTEES:
INTERIOR AND INSULAR AFFAIRS

SUBCOMMITTEES:
CHAIRMAN:
MINING AND NATURAL RESOURCES
NATIONAL PARKS AND
PUBLIC LANDS

PUBLIC WORKS AND
TRANSPORTATION

SUBCOMMITTEES:
SURFACE TRANSPORTATION
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

EDUCATION AND LABOR
SUBCOMMITTEE:
ELEMENTARY, SECONDARY
AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Mr. Fred VanKirk
Acting Commissioner
Department of Highways
Building 5, Room A-109
State Capitol Complex
Charleston, West Virginia 25305

Dear Mr. VanKirk:

I understand that you, Secretary Dunn, and Governor Caperton will soon be making the final decision on the route of the state's newest highway. I have been quite concerned and involved with this project since the awarding of the money for the feasibility study, and I would like you to include the following comments in the official record.

Now that the information about the proposed highway linking Point Pleasant to the state interstate system is in, the time has come to interpret the numbers, weigh them in light of West Virginia's greatest needs and concerns, and decide which alternative, in the long run, will best serve the people of our state.

[In the "Ranking of Alternatives by Goal" section of the DOH report handed out at the public hearing in Point Pleasant on September 26, 1989, the unweighted numerical values of the cost, environmental, and socio-economic goals of the three routes do imply that the Kanawha corridor should be the location of the road. However, a second, more contemplative consideration of this material shows that, in the long-term and in terms of the economic development potential which our state so desperately needs, the highway down Route 2 to I-64 near Milton in eastern Cabell County is clearly superior. Although the initial investment in this alternative would be greater than with two of the other roads, the return on that investment is tremendously higher than any proposed route, as your own data shows.]

Given the economic dire straits in which the State of West Virginia finds itself today, it is apparent to me that the most logical and intelligent location for the highway would not be in the place merely where the initial outlay would be low -- and the economic potential is equally insignificant -- but in the area where it will create a long-term economic upswing. The road from Point Pleasant to Milton satisfies that need by opening up the Ohio Valley and Eastern Cabell County, allowing these regions, which for decades have been recognized as the prime location for

Mr. Fred VanKirk

Page 2

October 13, 1989

economic expansion in the state, to flourish. [Goodyear Tire and Rubber, Akzo Chemie America, Apple Grove Pulp and Paper, D&E Industries, Service Machine, Blenko Glass, Coopervision Cilco, Intra-Optics, Transfab. These companies, and a host of others along existing Route 2 and in eastern Cabell County, are indicative of the potential for economic development in this region, and it is wasteful and foolish not to give it the chance to expand.]

You know as well as I the scarcity of federal highway dollars; this could be one of our last chances to secure the money for such a project. I would hope that you, Secretary Dunn, and Governor Caperton will thoughtfully evaluate the long-term impact of the Mason to Cabell County Route, recognizing its tremendous effect on the economic development in this region of our state well-known, even in your own study, to possess West Virginia's highest potential for industrial growth and expansion.

Only through choices made with an intelligent, thoughtful, and far-sighted vision by us, the elected representatives of the people, can the economic health and vitality of West Virginia be ensured for future generations.

With warmest personal regards, I am

Sincerely,



NICK J. RAHALL, II
Member of Congress

NJR/rsr