



U.S. Congressman

Nick Rahall*WORKING FOR WEST VIRGINIANS***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****CONTACT: STEPHEN SPINA****WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 1990****PHONE: (202) 225-3452****RAHALL ON WAYPORTS: THEY WILL BECOME THE ONLY WAY TO FLY**

WASHINGTON, D.C.-- U.S. Rep. Nick J. Rahall, II (D-WV) testified today before the Subcommittee on Aviation in an effort to bolster support for the implementation of a "Wayport" program for Southern West Virginia. Rahall pointed out that at the current rate of airport growth and continued gridlock, "Wayports will become the only way to fly."

"Wayports would be built in rural, unpopulated areas and would utilize unused airspace," said Rahall. "They would not replace existing airports, but rather, increase the capacity by serving as transfer points for connecting flights. This would free airspace and enable hub airports to increase their ability to serve as points of origin or termination."

Congressman James Oberstar, the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Aviation, pointed out that Chicago's O'Hare Airport already had the dubious distinction of being the first airport to reach the milestone of 100,000 delay hours with Atlanta and Denver quickly approaching these figures.

Rahall agreed pointing out that the statistics show that things do not seem to be getting any better. "Chicago's O'Hare Airport averaged 10-minute delays in 1989 and the number of passengers it is expected to serve is estimated to double by the year 2020," said Rahall.

"There has been a 65 percent increase in air travel in the past ten years, and in the next ten years, the amount of air traffic will increase by another 65 percent," said Rahall. "Let us take care of both of our needs, let's work together."

"Just as the Iron Horse on steel rails tied this nation together and changed the shape of American travel, so to will Wayports bear on its wings a revitalized rural America," said Rahall. "The rural economies of our nation will be given a new lease on life. No longer will the polarization of urban and rural communities continue its spiraling trend."

Further hearings will be held on the Wayport concept. On Thursday, February 8th, Mr. Matthew Miller, Chairman of the Huntington Chamber of Commerce and Mr. James Casto, Chairman of the Huntington Chamber of Commerce Air Service Committee, who are both members of the Cabell County Wayport Committee, will testify before the Subcommittee.

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