



U.S. Congressman

Nick Rahall*WORKING FOR WEST VIRGINIANS*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MARCH 12, 1994CONTACT: JIM ZOIA
(202) 225-9989**RAHALL PANEL APPROVES NATIONAL HIGHWAY SYSTEM**

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The proposed National Highway System cleared its first Congressional hurdle today when the House Surface Transportation Subcommittee approved legislation to designate the 159,000 mile system, U.S. Rep. Nick J. Rahall (D-WV) announced. Rahall serves as the Subcommittee's chairman.

"The National Highway System represents the crown jewels of this country's roads and highways," Rahall stated. "These are the roads which will receive the highest priority treatment from the Federal government."

As required by the Congress as part of the landmark Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA), last December the Secretary of Transportation submitted a proposed National Highway System to Congress for designation. In the event Congress fails to designate the system through legislation by September 1995, approximately \$6.6 billion worth of Federal highway funds will cease flowing to the States.

Incorporated into the National Highway System are the existing Interstate and Defense Highway Systems, certain urban and rural principal arterials, and high-priority corridors identified by the Congress.

Rahall said that West Virginia's 1,742-mile system includes the I-73 Corridor, the Coalfields Expressway segment of the proposed Transamerica (I-66) Corridor and the proposed Shawnee Parkway. The Coalfields Expressway and Shawnee Parkway had originally been excluded from the proposed system submitted to the Congress last December. All three roads were advanced by Rahall as part of ISTEA in 1991.

West Virginia's share of National Highway System funds is approximately \$41.4 million per year subject to a 20% State match for a total of \$49.6 million per year. National Highway System funds apportioned to West Virginia may be used for construction, rehabilitation, restoration, resurfacing and reconstruction projects on highways and roads designated on the system.

Rahall also included in the bill \$14.4 million in additional funds for the New River Parkway. "With the completion of the draft Environmental Impact Statement on this project close at hand, I do not expect the parkway to be plagued by any further major delays," Rahall said.

Also included in the bill is \$3.4 million for Huntington's Tri-State Transit Authority to purchase new buses, and \$2 million for Rahall's Southern West Virginia Coal Heritage Initiative. Under the bill, the funds would be available to implement a recommendation in a recent National Park Service report to establish heritage tour routes in the southern part of the State.

MORE

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According to Rahall, the full Committee on Public Works and Transportation is expected to consider the National Highway System legislation next week.

The following highways and roads are on West Virginia's National Highway System as proposed by the U.S. Department of Transportation:

Interstate Highway System

Interstate 77; Interstate 79; Interstate 64; Interstate 81 (eastern panhandle); Interstate 70 (northern panhandle); Interstate 470 (northern panhandle); Interstate 68 (north-central).

Appalachian Corridors

Corridor G (U.S. Route 119 between Charleston and Williamson); Corridor L (U.S. Route 19 between I-79 and I-77); Corridor H (segments of US Route 33 (east of I-79) US Route 219, WV Route 93 and WV Route 55); Corridor D (US Route 50 between Clarksburg and Parkersburg); Corridor Q (US Route 460).

High-Priority Corridor Designated by Congress

I-73 High Priority Corridor (US Route 52 between Huntington and Bluefield, includes the TOLSIA Highway and the 'common ground' corridor with the Shawnee Parkway); the Shawnee Parkway; and the Coalfields Expressway segment that serves as West Virginia's route for the proposed Transamerica (I-66) Corridor.

Principal Arterial Routes

US Route 219; US Route 35; US Route 220/WV Route 93 (eastern panhandle); US Route 522 (eastern panhandle); US Route 340 (eastern panhandle); WV Route 2; WV Route 9 (eastern panhandle).



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