



U.S. Congressman
Nick Rahall
WORKING FOR WEST VIRGINIANS

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SENATOR SASSER TAKES UP RAHALL BILL

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- U.S. Rep. Nick Rahall today announced that Senator Sasser (D-TN) has introduced his Surplus Property Bill on the Senate side.

In remarks made on the Senate floor, Senator Sasser said, "At a time when these financially strapped localities are having an increasingly difficult time maintaining and developing their infrastructure and basic services, we should ensure that they get their fair share of equipment the federal government cannot use."

Rahall's bill calls for the pecking order of surplus property generated by the Defense Department to be returned to its original form: states first before foreign governments.

"The law is very clear in its original intent," said Rahall. "The original law, which dates back to 1949, called for surplus property from any federal agency to be offered to states first. This surplus property proved to be instrumental in helping local communities meet their property needs. However, in 1986, a little known amendment to the Defense Authorization Bill changed all of that. Foreign governments were now at the top of the list to receive this property. My bill rights a wrong: it puts states first before foreign governments."

Rahall had testified in early June before the Government Operations Subcommittee on Government Activities and Transportation at which he pointed out the critical need for this surplus property in local communities.

"Piping for water systems, sheet metal for road construction, pan-scrappers, and scooploaders, all of these items would be of invaluable use to West Virginia," said Rahall. "One pan-scraper, which are already being used in West Virginia to move solid waste in our landfills, is estimated to be worth \$418,000. Region Eight received one from the Surplus Property Division for \$12,000. These are the kinds of savings we are talking about. Most of the communities in my district couldn't afford \$418,000."

Rahall predicted that his Surplus Property Bill will come before the Foreign Affairs Committee and Armed Services Committee later this summer.

"I'll tell them the same thing I told the Government Operations Committee. We need to start putting states needs first before foreign governments."

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