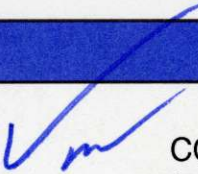


U.S. Congressman
Nick Rahall
WORKING FOR WEST VIRGINIANS

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FOREIGN COAL IMPORTS INTO U.S. ON THE RISE
RAHALL LEGISLATION AIMED AT COUNTERING TREND

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- U.S. Rep. Nick J. Rahall (D-WV) today warned that according to the latest federal government figures the level of foreign coal entering the United States rose in 1989 compared to the previous year level.

"These coal imports represent a tumor on the energy security of this Nation," Rahall said. "This tumor can only be diagnosed as being malignant; growing and spreading throughout the electric utility markets of the United States."

Rahall, who has had a long-standing commitment to fight the growing trend in the amount of foreign coal infiltrating into the U.S., said that his two anti-coal import bills should gain increased support in light of the latest data.

"At this crucial juncture in the debate over acid rain control legislation, I think the fact that Canada last year almost doubled the amount of coal it exported to the United States must be taken into consideration," Rahall said in reference to the Canadian government's assertion that coal burning in the U.S. gives rise to acid rain falling on Canada.

Last year, almost 3 million tons of foreign coal was imported into the U.S. Of that amount, 1.3 million tons originated in Colombia, 1 million tons from Canada and 357,000 tons from Venezuela with lesser tonnages from a number of other countries. In 1988, approximately 2 million tons of imported coal entered the U.S.

Rahall's has introduced two separate anti-coal import bills. The first would impose an \$8 per ton duty on imported coal. The purpose of the duty is to offset the competitive advantage foreign producers have as a result of not having to meet environmental, health, welfare and safety requirements of the kind imposed on U.S. coal producers. The second measure seeks to address one of the factors which have been an essential element in the establishment of new mining operations in both Colombia and Venezuela: the financial and technical expertise of U.S. mining entities. The legislation would prohibit the issuance of new federal coal leases to any company which is involved in the production and importation of foreign coal into the U.S..

"From a public policy standpoint, I see no reason why we should award companies responsible for foreign coal coming into this country with public coal resources when they are contributing to the loss of employment opportunities in southern West Virginia," Rahall said.

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