



U.S. Congressman  
**Nick Rahall**  
*WORKING FOR WEST VIRGINIANS*

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## **RAHALL: SOUTHERN WV COAL IN HIGH DEMAND OHIO POWERPLANTS NOW LARGEST U.S. UTILITY MARKET**

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Powerplants located in Ohio now surpass those in West Virginia as the largest market for steam coal produced in Fourth Congressional District counties, U.S. Rep. Nick J. Rahall (D-WV) said today. According to Rahall, Ohio utilities bought 18% of all the steam coal produced in Logan and Mingo Counties and purchased by the domestic electric utility industry in 1988, the latest year for which figures are available. During the previous year, powerplants in West Virginia ranked first.

Rahall has been surveying domestic electric utility purchases of steam coal produced in the counties which comprise the Fourth Congressional District in order to assist his examination of the potential effects various legislation may have on the amount of coal produced and its domestic markets. Most of this steam coal is produced in Logan and Mingo Counties.

In 1988, 17,787,500 tons of steam coal produced from the Fourth Congressional District--almost a million ton increase over the 1987 level--was purchased by 34 electric utility companies in 18 states. Powerplants in seven of those states accounted for 81% of the total purchases with utilities in Ohio accounting for 3,233,600 tons, followed by those operating in North Carolina (2,921,000 tons), West Virginia (1,982,700 tons), Michigan (1,773,700 tons), Georgia (1,569,000 tons), Virginia (1,531,600 tons) and Kentucky (1,384,200 tons).

In 1987, West Virginia utilities ranked first, followed by those in North Carolina, Ohio, Kentucky, Virginia, Michigan and Georgia. During that year, powerplants in West Virginia burned 3,254,500 tons of Mingo and Logan County coal; 1,271,800 tons more than in 1988. According to Rahall, the reduction is attributable to Appalachian Power's Mountaineer plant which, while burning only West Virginia produced coal, in 1988 reduced its coal purchases overall.

Among electric utility companies, at 2,850,000 tons, Carolina Power and Light operating in North Carolina continued to be the single largest market for Logan and Mingo County coal. In 1988 as in 1987, the company was followed by Appalachian Power at 1,922,600 tons. Georgia Power moved from fifth to third rank in 1988, at 1,569,000 tons, and 1987 third-ranking Dayton Power and Light moved down to fourth place in 1988 at 1,447,300. Virginia Electric and Power which ranked fourth in 1987, was fifth in 1988 at 1,141,000 tons.

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"What this data tells me is that southern West Virginia's low-sulfur coal continues to be the fuel of choice for many electric utility companies and will most probably benefit under the type of acid rain control legislation pending in the Congress," Rahall said.

According to Rahall: "Under about any acid rain control scenerio we will maintain our existing electric utility markets in southern states like North Carolina and most probably expand in that region as well. Not only is this region linked to us by geographic proximity, but our coal is needed so they can meet air quality requirements in those states. In addition, we should also be able to maintain our crucial Ohio and Michigan markets in the Midwest."

However, Rahall warned that midwestern markets should not be taken for granted due to the potential for fierce competition from low-sulfur western United States coal producers. He also noted that in the expanding Florida and the Gulf Coast utility markets, southern West Virginia coal will continue to do battle against imported low-sulfur coal from Colombia and Venezuela for market shares.