



U.S. Congressman
Nick Rahall
WORKING FOR WEST VIRGINIANS

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RAHALL TESTIFIES: STATES FIRST BEFORE FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS

WASHINGTON, D.C. — U.S. Rep. Nick Rahall (D-WV) today testified before the Government Operations subcommittee on Government Activities and Transportation in support of his bill, H.R. 4026, The Surplus Property Bill. The bill calls on the pecking order for 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. This surplus property proved to be instrumental in helping local communities meet their 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 then presented the subcommittee with three photographs which exemplified how surplus property would benefit needy states like West Virginia. Rahall held up photos of a 100 KW generator, "which have provided towns across West Virginia with power in times of emergency," said Rahall. "Such generators cost the federal government \$50,000, but through this program the Huntington State Hospital received the generator for only \$2,500."

Another photograph that the Congressman displayed was of a "pan and scraper." This piece of heavy machinery is being used by West Virginia in Region 8 Planning and Development Solid Waste Authority.

"The West Virginia Region 8 acquired 3 of the pans and 2 of the scrappers from the Surplus Property Division and is using them to maintain and excavate its land fills. The equipment is worth about \$418,000 and was acquired for only \$12,000," said Rahall. "Many of the communities in West Virginia could not afford \$418,000. I want to see that they don't have to."

Also testifying before the subcommittee were George Afflerbach, Director of Surplus Property in West Virginia and Jack Brooks, former Chairman of the Government Operations Committee.

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