



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

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**WEST VIRGINIA MUST BE PROTECTED AGAINST OUT-OF-STATE  
LOW-LEVEL RADIOACTIVE WASTE, RAHALL SAYS**

**WASHINGTON, D.C. --** U.S. Rep. Nick J. Rahall (D-WV) today charged that the State of West Virginia stands to be one of the biggest losers from a Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) policy that sets the stage for the disposal of low-level radioactive waste in municipal waste landfills.

"Solid waste disposal, and in particular out-of-state solid waste disposal, has been one of the most highly charged issues in the State of West Virginia - independent of the NRC's recent low-level radioactive waste policy," Rahall stated during an oversight hearing by the Subcommittee on Energy and the Environment. "It does not take a brain surgeon to conclude that NRC's policy coupled with the interest of Northeastern states in making West Virginia their alternative dump site is a deadly combination for the State."

For several years, many West Virginians have been fighting against landfill proposals that would accept out-of-state waste as more and more Northeastern states, such as Pennsylvania and New Jersey, target the State as their alternative municipal waste dumping ground. As landfills across the Nation reach their maximum capacity, many cities are forced to look for alternative landfill spots.

The purpose of Thursday's Congressional hearing was to examine the NRC's June 27, 1990, policy statement which enables nuclear utilities, hospitals, and other facilities to petition the federal agency to dispose of certain low-level radioactive waste in municipal landfills and incinerators instead of licensed facilities. Currently, low-level radioactive waste may be deposited only in one of three federally licensed landfills in the country.

"The Nuclear Regulatory Commission's low-level radioactive waste policy strikes fear in West Virginians and for a good reason. This policy has the potential of establishing West Virginia as the Nation's low-level radioactive waste dumping ground," Rahall said.

Even where landfills that would accept out-of-state waste are being supported by local people, such as in McDowell County, there was no expectation that low-level radioactive waste could potentially be involved, Rahall maintained.

"It is dishonest for the NRC to try to change the rules of the game at this point," he said. In this regard, Rahall expressed particular concern over whether the NRC anticipated forcing states and localities to accept low-level radioactive waste even if they object to the practice. Rahall concluded his testimony by emphasizing that he will do all in his power to prevent out-of-state low-level radioactive waste from entering West Virginia's borders.

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