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JULY 27, 1990

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RAHALL'S DRUG ZONES LEGISLATION EXPANDED

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- U.S. Rep. Nick Rahall (D-WV) said today that his Drug Free School Zones program is gaining increased support among his colleagues and has been expanded in conjunction with a bill introduced by U.S. Rep. Nita Lowey (D-NY).

"This bill is part of a $539.2 million package provided for under the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act (DFSCA)," said Rahall. "Specifically, this bill expands many of the preventive drug abuse programs already in place under the Drug Free Schools Act, and provides for modest new programs of training for counselors and other personnel."

Rahall added that this bill requires the Department of Education to reserve $5 million of appropriated funds for grants for successful drug abuse education programs, and it allows school districts to use funds for afterschool drug abuse prevention programs. The bill would also codify into law the Drug Free School Zones criteria.

Rahall noted that, in November of last year, his Drug Free School Zones Bill was authorized, which made it permissible to use a portion of the Governor's 30 percent set-aside of money under the DFSCA.

"Since that time, I have been asked, by my own Governor's office as well as by teachers and others in my state and district, just how a school could go about establishing a drug free school zone, and I urge all Governors to commit a portion of their annual DFSCA set-aside for this purpose," said Rahall.

"The intent of the drug abuse education and prevention legislation, aimed at schools and communities, is that it be used wisely and well in keeping drugs off our school grounds and out of kids lockers," said Rahall. "Our approach is two-pronged: educate children as to the devastating and long-term effect of drugs, and provide children, teachers, and parents with tangible evidence of our effort to keep drugs away from our kids."

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