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RAHALL SEEKS END TO TOXIC STUDY MAZE

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Because of the recent maze of studies and reports which have only served to exacerbate the emotions of the communities of Ceredo and Kenova, U.S. Rep. Nick Rahall (D-WV) has urged the National Institute of Health (NIH) to step to the forefront in trying to end that controversy.

Rahall announced today that after contact he made with NIH, they have assigned the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) to investigate the situation of Ceredo-Kenova. Rahall has also contacted both of these agencies in seeking their cooperation.

On June 9th of this year, Rep. Rahall contacted NIH and asked them to conduct a study of the Ceredo-Kenova area and ascertain to what extent, if any, have the effects of toxic emissions had on the health of the residents of that area.

"The fight that has ensued over who is to blame has divided this community," said Rahall. "It is my hope that a detailed, objective study will solidly determine if local residents are at risk from industrial emissions."

Rahall added, "What we are not trying to do here is assign blame. What we are trying to do is determine if there is a problem, and if there is what can be done. Those people have heard enough speculation. What they need is hard, cold facts so that each individual can not only accept the situation for what it is, but also make educated decisions about how they want to deal with any problems that might be revealed by a study."

The Congressman clarified that the study will be conducted through the EPA and ATSDR with NIH lending laboratory support and consultation. The Director of the National Institute of Environmental Health Services (NIEHS), a subdivision of NIH, Dr. David Rall informed Rahall that those two agencies would be best suited for the Ceredo-Kenova study. They would be able to conduct field studies and investigate first hand.

"I think that what we are heading towards here is a coordinated effort between the EPA, ATSDR, NIH, and the people of the Ceredo-Kenova area," said Rahall. "And I believe that if these agencies work together with the people of that area, there is no doubt we will come up with a conclusive and direct answer to the questions that have clouded that area."