



U.S. Congressman
Nick Rahall
WORKING FOR WEST VIRGINIANS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
AUGUST 27, 1990

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**CONGRESSIONAL HEARING SLATED FOR RAHALL'S BRAMWELL PARK BILL
SEEN AS WEST VIRGINIA'S NEXT HARPERS FERRY**

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- A crucial House panel will conduct a September 18th hearing on legislation being advanced by U.S. Rep. Nick J. Rahall (D-WV) to designate a National Historical Park at Bramwell in southwestern Mercer County. The park would be administered by the National Park Service.

"Both the coal baron mansions and the old coal camps in Bramwell and its outlying areas are representative of the unique coal mining heritage of southern West Virginia--our history and our culture--and I believe this is something of national significance," Rahall said.

Rahall's bill, H.R.4978, the "Bramwell National Historical Park Act of 1990" will be the subject of the hearing that has been scheduled by the House Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands in Washington, D.C. Rahall serves as the ranking Democratic Member of the panel. The purpose of the hearing is to establish a record on the legislation.

"I view Bramwell as being West Virginia's next Harpers Ferry," Rahall noted in reference to the State's only National Historical Park, located in the eastern Panhandle, and the type of economic development opportunities presented by a National Park System unit designation.

According to Rahall, the proposed Bramwell National Historical Park is envisioned as being a 'living' unit of the National Park System in a manner similar to Harpers Ferry. People would continue to make the area their homes and the legislation makes a number of specific provisions to protect private property rights. Development of the proposed historical park would be outlined in a management plan, which would be devised by the National Park Service with public input and through consultation with the Bramwell National Historical Park Advisory Committee established by the bill.

The Bramwell legislation is an element of Rahall's multi-faceted Southern West Virginia Coal Heritage Initiative aimed at the coordinated development and promotion of southern West Virginia's unique cultural and historical resources to compliment the existing network of State and National park units, State forests and Army Corps recreational lakes. Rahall is a veteran of National Park legislation, having been the House sponsor of the bill that established the New River Gorge National River in 1978 and the author of the measure enacted in 1988 creating the Gauley River National Recreation Area and the Bluestone National Scenic River.

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