



U.S. Congressman
Nick Rahall
WORKING FOR WEST VIRGINIANS

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RAHALL SEES BRIGHT NEW YEAR IN WEST VIRGINIA'S FUTURE

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Amid an economy that has slipped into recession and a host of state governments in fiscal disarray, U.S. Rep. Nick Rahall (D-WV) remains optimistic about what the new year holds for his home state.

"Make no mistake about it: these are tough economic times, but West Virginia is on the upswing and I believe that great things lie ahead for the Mountain State," said Rahall.

Rahall stressed that the current situation in the Gulf will rejuvenate the debate to create a national energy policy. A policy he hopes will make the United States energy independent and will be based on coal.

"The days of cheap oil are over," said Rahall. "We have pushed it to the limit. It has taken a crisis of this magnitude to drive home the fact that we no longer can afford the luxury of foreign oil."

Rahall also pointed out that this Congress will decide the fate of the Highway Trust Fund and seeing to it that West Virginia is at the top of that list is at the head of his agenda. Among the projects he will fight to include when those funds are dispersed are improvements to U.S. 52 in Wayne and Mingo counties, finishing Corridor G and building a new four-lane highway through Mason County into Cabell County.

"We have an excellent shot of getting much of the funding we need since our proposals are both energy impacted roads and roads that would promote economic development and increased tourism trade," said Rahall.

Rep. Rahall is also introducing a Black Lung Benefits Bill designed to revamp the entire process.

"My bill would not only allow miners to receive compensation with only one piece of qualifying evidence. It also would protect widows and dependent children, and see to it that a miner's Social Security benefits would no longer be offset by their black lung benefits," said Rahall. "We need to get this benefits program back on the track that it was originally constructed."

"I am looking forward to a Congress filled with fresh challenges including the continued fight for a new civil right bill and the passage of my surplus property bill, which seeks to give states first crack at federal leftovers, like generators and medical supplies, before foreign countries."

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