

U.S. Congressman
Nick Rahall
WORKING FOR WEST VIRGINIANS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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WEST VIRGINIA TO RECEIVE OVER ONE BILLION DOLLARS UNDER HOUSE HIGHWAY PLAN

**Rahall Says New Highway To Be Built Across Southern W.Va.
*Huntington 'Triad' On New National Highway System
TOLSIA Highway, King Coal Highway and Shawnee Parkway
All Accorded Special Treatment***

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- West Virginia would receive a whopping \$1 billion in federal highways funds in addition to an extra \$200 million for special southern West Virginia projects under a measure approved by a panel of the House Public Works and Transportation Committee, U.S. Rep. Nick J. Rahall (D-WV), a panel member, said today.

"The more than \$1 billion in federal funding for road construction and maintenance we will receive under this bill will be a considerable increase over the approximately \$130 million a year our State has been receiving from the Highway Trust Fund under the current program," Rahall said.

The centerpiece of the House plan is the establishment of a National Highway System. The routes on this system would include interstate highways and other major roads such as the Appalachian corridors in West Virginia.

However, the measure places priority on the construction of several nationally significant 'high-priority corridors' on the new National Highway System with special treatment provided for 'high-priority segments' on these corridors.

"I am pleased to announce that if the House bill becomes law we will be building a new highway across southern West Virginia, I-73 between Huntington and Bluefield. We will also be building the TransAmerica Highway, often referred to as I-66. The most probable routing of this highway would bring it through Kentucky into southern West Virginia in the vicinity of Williamson," Rahall stated.

"In this regard, under this bill, I have managed to secure an extra \$100 million in a special allocation of funds for the purposes of upgrading the TOLSIA Highway between Huntington and Williamson," Rahall said. "This dangerous segment of road is designated under the bill as a high-priority segment of the I-73 corridor and will be accorded special treatment."

"Furthermore, I have secured \$50 million to begin construction of the portion of I-73, known as the Shawnee Parkway and King Coal Highway 'common-ground' from Williamson to the three county juncture of Wyoming, McDowell and Mercer near Crumpler, and \$50 million to start building the segment of the Shawnee Parkway from this juncture to its intersection with I-77 at Flat Top," Rahall stated.

MORE

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The congressman emphasized that the \$200 million he obtained in the bill for the three high-priority segments is over and above the \$1 billion apportionment of Highway Trust Funds for the State. He noted that the legislation directs the Secretary of Transportation and the State to make these projects a top priority and expedite their construction.

Rahall also said that the Huntington-Point Pleasant-Charleston 'Triad' will be included on the new National Highway System. "Under this bill, the 'Triad' will be given the same high-priority as our interstate highways and the state would have to give preference to this project."

In general, under the House plan the federal share of any highway construction or maintenance project would be 80%, with a 90% federal share for interstate maintenance costs. However, for the high-priority corridors and segments the state could obtain repayable advances from the Highway Trust Fund to cover the full projects' cost.

In addition to the new National Highway System, the bill establishes what are termed as rural and urban mobility systems. Under these programs, federal assistance for construction and maintenance costs would be available to routes not on the National Highway System.

"Under this legislation all areas of southern West Virginia will benefit and will be more accessible," Rahall concluded. "This will promote economic development and enhance the quality of our lives."

The bill is tentatively scheduled to be considered by the full House of Representatives next week.

**NATIONAL HIGHWAY SYSTEM
[Shaded Routes]**

Interstates, Appalachian Corridors
and Huntington-Point Pleasant-Charleston

**HIGH-PRIORITY CORRIDORS
ON NATIONAL HIGHWAY SYSTEM
[Heavy Black Routes]**

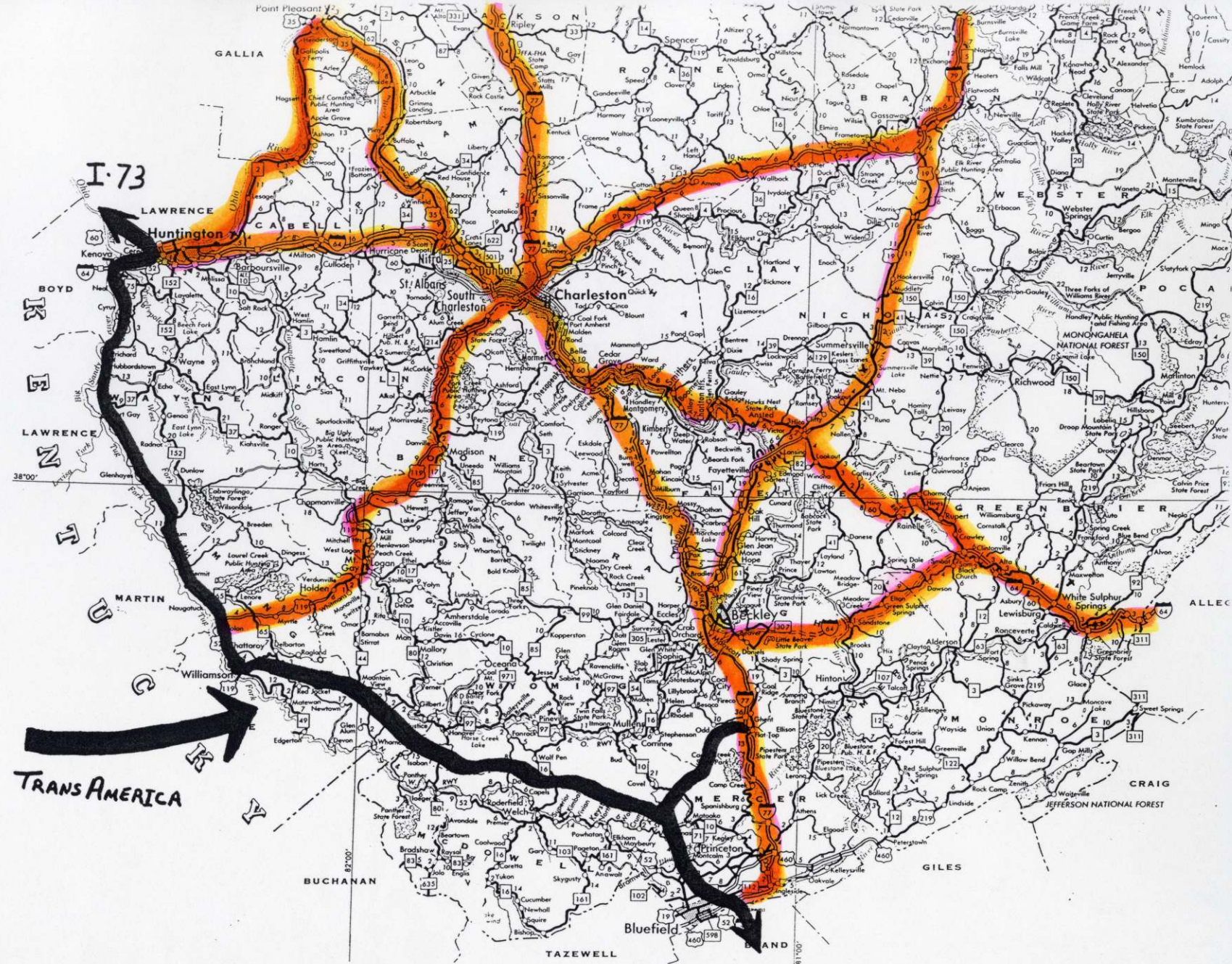
I-73 and TransAmerica

**HIGH-PRIORITY SEGMENTS OF
HIGH-PRIORITY CORRIDORS**

TOLSIA Highway - Route 52
(Huntington to Williamson)

King Coal Highway/Shawnee Parkway
'Common Ground' - Route 52
(Williamson to Wyoming-McDowell-Mercer
County Juncture near Crumpler)

Shawnee Parkway segment to I-77
(3-County Juncture to Flat Top)



Brian:

Statement by Nick Rutheall on Beckley to Grundy -

I HAVE DISCUSSED THE BECKLEY TO GRUNDY PROJECT WITH THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE AND HE IS FULLY AWARE OF MY LONGSTANDING CONCERN FOR THIS IMPORTANT CORRIDOR.

AS SUCH, TODAY, I HAVE RECEIVED HIS ASSURANCES THAT THE BECKLEY TO GRUNDY ROUTE WILL BE ADDED TO THE NEW NATIONAL HIGHWAY SYSTEM DURING HOUSE FLOOR CONSIDERATION OF THE HOUSE BILL NEXT WEEK.

THIS WOULD MEAN THAT THE BECKLEY TO GRUNDY CORRIDOR WOULD BE ACCORDED THE SAME PRIORITY TREATMENT AS IS GIVEN TO OUR INTERSTATE SYSTEM.