



U.S. Congressman
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WORKING FOR WEST VIRGINIANS

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BILL AFFECTING APCO POWERLINE APPROVED BY HOUSE

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- U.S. Rep. Nick J. Rahall (D-WV) today revealed that the energy bill passed by the House of Representatives yesterday evening contains legislation affecting the proposed 765 kilovolt APCO electric transmission line.

The provision was part of a package of energy-related legislation Rahall worked to steer through the House Interior Committee in April.

As passed by the House, the energy bill would provide for new and more stringent requirements to govern the consideration of electric powerline applications for rights-of-way across federal lands. If enacted into law, the provisions would affect the fate of the proposed 765 kilovolt APCO electric transmission line.

"This legislation seeks to insure that rights-of-ways for powerlines are not approved when they would adversely affect resource values which we, in southern West Virginia, cherish," Rahall stated.

In order to be constructed as proposed, the powerline requires rights-of-way across federal lands managed by the Forest Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the National Park Service. The Forest Service, through the Jefferson National Forest, has been designated as the lead federal agency to conduct the necessary Environmental Impact Statement.

The central element of the provision would allow the Forest Service to approve a right-of-way for a powerline only if it: "Will not result in substantial degradation of natural or cultural resources, scenic or recreational values, watershed resources, or fish and wildlife populations or habitat affected by the proposed system or affected by the cumulative effects of the proposed system and other uses of such lands or adjacent lands."

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