



U.S. Congressman

**Nick Rahall***WORKING FOR WEST VIRGINIANS***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****JUNE 25, 1992****CONTACT: STEVE SPINA****PHONE: (202) 225-3452****RAHALL INTRODUCES SECOND STEP IN CLEAN WATER STRATEGY**

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- U.S. Rep. Nick Rahall (D-WV) today unveiled the second leg of his dual approach to sewage treatment and cleaner water for southern West Virginia.

"The situation is simple: our smallest communities cannot afford clean water," said Rahall. "My bill creates a 'communities in need' fund, which would act as a second pot of money with less stringent requirements than were previously needed. Now our smallest communities, that need help the most, could afford the construction of new facilities."

Rahall's latest measure would reauthorize the State Revolving Loan Fund, which is set to expire in 1994, through the year 2000 as well as create a "Rural Community Environmental Assistance Account", a set-aside fund for communities under 5,000 in population.

Rahall stressed that all 44 West Virginia communities, which were targeted by the EPA for dumping raw sewage into West Virginia's rivers, could be funded by the account under this bill.

Rahall said that assistance may be in the form of low-interest loans and grant subsidies. The loans would be for 30 years and payment may be deferred until three years after the completion of a project. Grants may be awarded for up to 75 percent of the project cost or up to 85 percent of the project cost if the project uses new technology.

Last month, Rep. Rahall introduced legislation that would authorize the Army Corps of Engineers to assist eligible local governments in the planning, design and construction of wastewater treatment works, public water systems and solid waste facilities. The bill would also authorize for the Corps an additional \$500 million a year to carry out activities under the act.

"West Virginia's smallest communities have been forced to adhere to more stringent EPA requirements while watching the pool of federal dollars dry up," said Rahall. "My approach, through these two pieces of legislation, seeks to replenish the state fund for wastewater dollars and reduce the amount of matching funds that states must provide."

Rahall is a senior Member of the Public Works and Transportation Committee and Water Resources Subcommittee.

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