



U.S. Congressman  
**Nick Rahall**  
*WORKING FOR WEST VIRGINIANS*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**MARCH 12, 1992**

**CONTACT: STEVE SPINA**

**PHONE: (202) 225-3452**

**RAHALL NOMINATED FOR MEDAL OF HONOR**

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- As Ellis Island prepares to celebrate their Centennial, The National Ethnic Coalition of Organizations (NECO) prepares its list of nominees for the Ellis Island Congressional Medal of Honor. U.S. Rep. Nick Rahall (D-WV) is among that list.

Selected because of their contribution to ethnic pride in all Americans, the past Ellis Island recipients include such names as: President Bush, Stan Musial, Gregory Peck, and Arnold Palmer. There have been 184 medals awarded since its creation in 1986.

Rep. Rahall's nomination will now be forwarded to one of the 43 ancestry and screening committee groups for further consideration.

The ceremonies are scheduled to take place on the historic island on April 26 and will be dedicated to the late Alex Haley, who will receive the award posthumously.

The Ellis Island Medals of Honor were established in 1986 by the Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation and the New York Statue of Liberty Centennial Commission.

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NICK J. RAHALL II  
4TH DISTRICT, WEST VIRGINIA

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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 9, 1992

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Mr. William Denis Fugazy  
Chairman  
N.E.C.O.  
555 Madison Avenue  
12th Floor  
New York, New York 10022

Dear Mr. Fugazy:

I am writing to inform you that I accept the nomination to receive the Ellis Island Congressional Medal of Honor.

I must tell you that to be considered among the ranks of Gregory Peck, President Bush, and Alex Haley is a true honor. I also feel privileged that my nomination comes during the Centennial celebration of Ellis Island, a place of special significance to all Americans of ethnic background.

I have checked my schedule for the month of April and can be in New York City on April 26, 1992. Enclosed please find my biography and a 8x10 black-and-white photograph.

Again, thank you for this distinguished nomination and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

With warm regard, I am,

Sincerely,

**COPY**

NICK J. RAHALL, II  
Member of Congress

NJR/sms

Enclosure



# N.E.C.O.

NATIONAL ETHNIC COALITION OF ORGANIZATIONS, INC.

M.



February 26, 1992

Congressman Nick J. Rahall II  
Member of Congress  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Rahall:

As we commence the preparations for the Centennial celebration of the opening of Ellis Island, I am pleased to advise you that your name has been recommended by Mr. Adib Kassis, Middle East Airlines, as a possible awardee of the Ellis Island Congressional Medal of Honor. This medal is awarded to Americans who have distinguished themselves as citizens of the United States as a representative of a specific ethnic, racial and religious group.

As you can see, as listed on the reverse of this letter, on two previous occasions these awards have been presented to many outstanding citizens from all walks of life. Three former Presidents, as well as President George Bush, have received this award.

It may interest you to know that this year the event is being dedicated to the memory of the late Mr. Alex Haley, esteemed author of the novel, "Roots," and we have arranged for a special Ellis Island Medal of Honor to be posthumously awarded to the family of Mr. Haley at the ceremonies. Enclosed with this letter is a copy of our press release to that effect as well as a copy of the story that appeared in the New York Post, which received broad coverage throughout the U.S.A.

It is necessary that we be advised at this time whether you would be available to receive this award, if so chosen by the selection committee, on Sunday, April 26, 1992 on Ellis Island for the awards ceremony and that evening at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel. Upon hearing from you, we will initiate the process of submitting your name for further consideration to one of the 43 ancestry and screening committee groups.

It is necessary that you be present to receive this award at one or both of the programs, either at Ellis Island or the Waldorf Astoria. Further details will be forwarded upon your indication of your willingness to accept.

Sincerely yours,

William Denis Pugazy

WDF:kda

N.E.C.O. representing the largest ethnic and heritage organizations in the United States, with over five million family members, is dedicated to universal brotherhood and to the advancement, protection, and encouragement of all ethnic groups and races.

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**FROM: NATIONAL ETHNIC COALITION OF ORGANIZATIONS (NECO)**  
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**NECO TO DEDICATE 1992 ELLIS ISLAND MEDAL OF HONOR CEREMONIES  
TO AUTHOR ALEX HALEY**

NEW YORK, Feb. 11 -- The 1992 Ellis Island Medal of Honor ceremonies scheduled to take place on the historic island April 26, will be dedicated to Alex Haley, it was announced today by William D. Fugazy, Chairman of the National Ethnic Coalition of Organizations (NECO).

In addition, Mr. Fugazy announced that an Ellis Island Medal of Honor will be awarded to Haley posthumously during the ceremonies.

Haley, the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of "Roots," died yesterday of a heart attack in a Seattle hospital.

"Alex Haley's work inspired Americans of all ethnic backgrounds, and he made all of us appreciate our own individual 'roots,'" said Mr. Fugazy. "I really cannot think of anyone who so perfectly embodies the spirit of the Ellis Island Medal of Honor, and it is especially poignant that he receive this honor on what will be the 100th anniversary of Ellis Island."

Mr. Fugazy said NECO would ask Haley's wife, My, and son, Bill, to attend the Ellis Island ceremonies in order to accept the medal.

Established in 1986 by the Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation and the New York Statue of Liberty Centennial Commission, the Ellis Island Medals of Honor recognize the contributions made by Americans from various heritage groups.

To date, 184 Ellis Island Medals of Honor have been awarded.

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## Ellis I. award to honor late Alex Haley

The 1992 Ellis Island Medal of Honor ceremony, scheduled for April 26, will be dedicated to the memory of author Alex Haley, it was announced yesterday.

Haley, the author of "Roots" who died Monday at the age of 70, will be awarded one of the medals posthumously at the ceremony, according to William Fugazy, chairman of the National Ethnic Coalition of Organizations.

The medals were established in 1986 to recognize contributions made by Americans from various heritage groups. To date, 184 medals have been awarded.



**HALEY**

UPI