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Windber, PA - U.S. Rep. John Murtha today joined officials of Johnstown Welding & Fabrication Industries in announcing the awarding of a contract valued around \$4 million to JWFI for producing protective armor for HUMVEEs utilized by the U.S. Armed Forces.

The armor is specially designed for the HUMVEEs to protect the troops from various attacks, including attacks from improvised explosive devises (IEDs). The contract will add up to 20 new jobs at JWFI, primarily at their new location in the former Bestform building in Windber.

"This program is good for our national defense and good for our local economy," Murtha said. "We work year in and year out on economic development, and we have what we believe is a winning approach -- an approach that has generated over 3,000 defense-related jobs in the Cambria-Somerset economy over the past 15 years. Adding another 20 jobs will continue to build on that success."

Murtha also noted that, just two days ago, JWF Industries was named by Lockheed Martin as part of the team to compete for the Joint Light Tactical Vehicle program.

Eighteen years after starting his company working alone in a two-car garage, JWFI President Bill Polacek employs a work force of 680, which operates in facilities encompassing more than 500,000 square feet, in six locations, five of which are in Johnstown area and another location in Baltimore.

About 70 new jobs have been created through JWFI's earlier defense work producing decks and other parts for aircraft cargo loaders, fabricating armor plate subassemblies for the Army's five-ton truck, and collaborating with other defense contractors on various military vehicles.

"I'm always pleased when we can bring new work and new jobs to our area, but it's especially gratifying to bring back some heavy industrial jobs - the type of jobs around which Johnstown was built," Murtha said. "We recently helped the Gautier mill expand into working with titanium, and this new work at JWFI is the same kind of work."

Polacek noted that the HUMVEE up-armor contract builds perfectly on skills and capabilities that JWF Industries has developed on previous defense projects.

"We have created a niche for ourselves in ground mobility equipment, and this contract is a logical progression for us," Polacek said. "Also it feels great to be part of a direct effort to protect American soldiers in theater."

