

## May 18, 2007 Murtha: Impact of Bush Budget Cuts on the Community Development Block Grant Program

For Immediate Release

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Note: The President's proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2008 significantly cuts domestic programs while continuing to spend nearly \$9 billion every month for the war in Iraq. Each week throughout the month of May, Congressman Murtha will explain how these budget cuts hurt our families and communities throughout the 12th Congressional District. While the President continues to insist on remaining in Iraq indefinitely with no timetable and no strategy for success, we continue to spend over \$300 million a day. His budget attempts to pay for this failed strategy by cutting some of the nation's most essential programs.

### Murtha: Impact of Bush Budget Cuts on the Community Development Block Grant Program

Washington D.C. - The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, which has existed for over 30 years, provides resources to our communities to address a wide range of unique development needs. These grants have a significant impact on community revitalization and renewal efforts throughout Pennsylvania.

As Western Pennsylvania's traditional industries like steel left the area and reduced the tax base, CDBG funding became an essential part of local budgets. These communities built America's infrastructure and supplied its military during two World Wars. Now, CDBG money is used for repairs and improvements to infrastructure that dates back to that time period.

For example, in Fayette County, a CDBG was recently used to help extend water lines to service 40 families. In Armstrong County, CDBG's have been used to make residential homes handicap accessible. In Washington County, a CDBG was used to revitalize the Charleroi central business district. And in Cambria County, CDBG's have been used to demolish vacant dilapidated structures.

The President's proposed budget for next year continues to make cuts to the CDBG program. Just three years ago, Pennsylvania received \$262 million from the CDBG program and if the President's budget proposal is enacted the Commonwealth's allocation of CDBG funds will be reduced to \$180 million. That's what we spend in roughly half a day in Iraq.

Based upon a survey of grantees in smaller cities and rural areas, Pennsylvania estimates that 136 water and sewer facilities, 76 street and road improvements, 22 park and recreation centers and 11 community centers were cancelled or not funded because of the President's continued cuts to the CDBG program in 2006.

Community Development Block Grants are essential for building better communities throughout Pennsylvania. Because the President insists on spending nearly \$9 billion every month in Iraq, domestic programs that have a real impact within our communities like the Community Development Block Grants suffer.