

## June 22, 2007 Murtha: House Introduces Important Legislation to Protect the Health and Safety of our Miners

For Immediate Release

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Washington D.C. - Congressman John P. Murtha, Chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense, announced today that he is an original cosponsor of the 2007 Mine Safety and Health Bills introduced this week in the House of Representatives.

In response to last year's mining tragedies in West Virginia, Congress passed the 2006 MINER Act. The legislation introduced this week supplements last years MINER Act by including, among other things, these additional provisions:

- \* Requires the installation of underground gas and smoke monitoring systems.
- \* Requires miners working alone to carry multi-gas detectors to protect them from otherwise undetectable toxic atmospheres they may encounter.
- \* Enhances mine operator penalties for a "pattern of violations" and for retaliation against miners who report safety or health violations.
- \* Establishes a national call center to enhance mine rescue and recovery operations.
- \* Reduces the amount of coal dust to which miners can be exposed in accordance with National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) recommendations.
- \* Requires miners to be equipped with the new personal dust monitors developed and certified by NIOSH.

"Protecting the health and safety of our miners is a priority," said Murtha. "The comprehensive Mine Safety and Health Bills expand on last year's legislation by enacting long overdue reforms."