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For Immediate Release

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Washington D.C. - Congressman John P. Murtha, Chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense, announced that yesterday the House of Representatives passed a \$21.4 billion Financial Services-General Government Appropriations Bill that includes funding for the Johnstown Area Regional Industries (JARI) Incubator and Workforce Development program.

The \$231,000 will allow JARI to expand its training services for companies in our area. JARI's training consortium coordinates efforts with business and industry, government, educational institutions, and regional service providers to respond to the competitive demands of a knowledge-based, technology intensive economy.

"JARI plays an instrumental role in assisting small businesses with consulting and marketing expertise to enable them to become self-sustaining, contributing members of the business community," Murtha said.

Small businesses in our area are able to take advantage of JARI's marketing analysis, advertising, accounting, loan packaging, bid preparation and executive education training opportunities. In the last five years JARI has trained and upgraded the job skills of 5,000 people and has assisted over 100 start-up companies in the region.

Last month, JARI broke ground on a 92 acre expansion of the Johnstown Business Park. This expansion project doubles the size of the existing park and provides our region with available land for future growth.

The Financial Services-General Government Appropriations Bill also makes key national investments into:

* Implementing the Help America Vote Act (HAVA): \$300 million, not funded by the President, for grants to help states upgrade voting machines and voter registration databases so that they are ready for the 2008 Presidential election.

* Greater Access to Capital for Economic Development in Disadvantaged and Rural Communities: Provides \$46 million more than last year to support economic development and financial services in disadvantaged and rural communities through housing loans, micro-business loans, community development banks and credit unions.