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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 today that the House of Representatives has passed a supplemental report to the underlying \$31.6 billion Energy and Water Appropriations Bill that includes funding for local sewage and water projects as well as construction and maintenance of our locks and dams.

Included in the fiscal year 2008 spending bill is \$70,300,000 for the general construction of Locks & Dams 2, 3 and 4 on the Monongahela River. This multi-year project includes the construction of a new gated dam at Braddock, construction of two new 84x720 locks at Charleroi, removal of Elizabeth Locks and Dams, and channel dredging.

"Many of the locks and dams on the Monongahela River were constructed over 75 years ago," commented Murtha. "Their overhaul and replacement is essential for commerce, recreation and future economic growth."

The appropriations bill also includes \$11,000,000 for the South Central Pennsylvania Environmental Infrastructure Program. This program provides the Army Corps of Engineers with the funding to design and construct projects for wastewater treatment, water supply, storage, and water resource protection and development in 18 Southwestern and South central Pennsylvania counties.

"The Environment Infrastructure Program has helped thousands of Pennsylvania residents gain access to clean and reliable water sources," said Murtha. "It has also helped to clean the environment by fixing malfunctioning on-lot septic systems that are currently releasing raw sewage into our rivers and streams."

Also included in the appropriations bill is \$1,700,000 for the West Virginia and Pennsylvania Flood Control Program. This funding will be used by the Army Corps to improve flood control, stream bank protection, storm water management, and channel clearing measures in the Lower Allegheny and Lower Monongahela River Basins.

The appropriations bill includes \$650,000 for Indiana University of Pennsylvania to research the conversion of waste biomass into biodegradable plastics and bioethanol. The project will develop a method for converting biomass waste, such as wood chips and switch grass, into sugar that can be used in the production of both bioethanol and biodegradable plastics.

"With rising fuel costs, this project makes economic sense because it converts existing waste into sugar that can be used to produce biofuel," said Murtha.

Also included in the appropriations bill is \$1,000,000 to establish the Center for Instrumented Critical Infrastructures within Concurrent Technology Corporation (CTC), in Johnstown. CTC has been working with Carnegie Mellon University and the Department of Energy to use sensor technology to protect the nation's pipelines and power grids. This initiative will develop and employ sensor networks for the supervision of pipeline systems to detect, identify, and prevent at an early stage material defects, pipe faults, gas leakages, or major damage due to natural disasters or human attack.

The Energy-Water Appropriations Bill also makes key national investments into:

- * Army Corps of Engineers: \$5.6 billion, \$713 million above the President's request, to address the backlog of operations and maintenance needs to sustain coastal and inland navigation infrastructure critical to the U.S. economy. Additional funding is also provided to repair and update hydropower dams to increase energy production.

- * Alternative Energy Sources: \$1.9 billion, \$638 million above the President's request, for energy efficiency and renewable energy programs that will help to reduce our nation's dependence on foreign oil. Additional funding is provided for solar energy development and demonstration, biofuel research and development, research into energy efficient buildings, and collaborating with industry on developing technologies for improved fuel efficiency for vehicles.