

## July 25, 2007 Murtha Summary of the Defense Appropriations Bill

For Immediate Release

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Washington D.C. - Congressman John P. Murtha, Chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense, today provided the following summary of the FY08 Defense Appropriations Bill during debate in the House Appropriations Committee:

"This bill strikes a balance between providing our military with the equipment, training, health care and family support services they need TODAY while investing in and preparing our military for the FUTURE.

"We have an obligation to support our troops and their families, prepare our forces to meet future threats, foster economic stability in weapons programs, and provide much needed accountability and oversight. This bill not only meets, but exceeds that obligation."

#### Supporting Our Troops and Their Families:

- \* Provides a 3.5 percent pay raise for all military personnel, 0.5 percent above the President's request for a military pay raise.

- \* Rejects the President's proposed increases in TRICARE co-pays by fully funding the \$1.9 billion TRICARE shortfall without cost to our troops.

- \* Appropriates \$2.9 billion to provide our military families with the immediate need for more counselors, teachers, and child care providers. This is \$558 million more than the President's request and this funding is urgently needed by our military families who are stressed by repeated and extended deployments.

- \* Fully funds the personnel, equipment and training costs of growing the Army by 7,000 soldiers and the Marine Corps by 5,000 Marines.

- \* When our troops return from theater, we want them to return to the best facilities and services available. The bill provides \$1.25 billion for Army facilities to upgrade barracks, improve child care facilities and enhance community services at bases throughout the U.S., Europe and Korea.

#### Preparing Our Forces to Meet Future Threats:

\* Provides an additional \$1.1 billion to create an additional Army Stryker Brigade. Commanders and soldiers constantly praise the Stryker vehicle as mobile, quiet and survivable.

\* Provides an additional \$925 million to purchase essential National Guard and Reserve equipment. This will ensure that they have the necessary equipment to meet overseas deployment demands and to respond to natural disasters here at home.

#### Fostering Economic Stability in Weapons Programs:

\* The bill provides \$3.698 billion above the President's request for five additional ships (1 LPD-17 Amphibious Transport Dock, 3 T-AKE Ammunition/Dry Cargo Carrier, 1 Virginia Class Submarine). This procurement increase is essential to ensuring the stability of our country's shipbuilding industry and to maintain sea superiority.

\* The Joint Strike Fighter (F-35) program is critical to our nation's ability to field a modern and capable fighter. The bill fully funds the President's request and adds \$200 million for production enhancements that will help drive down procurement costs and \$480 million to continue development of an alternative engine, thereby ensuring a competitive and reliable base for engine production.

#### Providing Accountability and Oversight:

\* DoD contract spending has grown significantly, while lacking accountability and plagued by cost overruns. The bill provides funding for 600 new General Services Administration contract specialists and additional Inspector General civilian personnel to provide much needed oversight on DoD contract services.

\* The GAO found that between the year's 2000-2005, O&M service contracts increased more than 73 percent. Over that same period of time DoD civilian pay costs increased 28 percent, thus negating any preconceived plan to save money by contracting out. The bill increases funding for defense contract management and oversight and reduces funding for contracted services by 5 percent across the services (\$1.3 billion), attributable to efficiencies and savings with improved management and oversight.

\* Directs the Secretary of Defense to develop uniform personnel standards and accountability for all DoD contracted security services, and to establish a clear set of rules-of engagement for those contracted security personnel operating in both Iraq and Afghanistan.

\* Eliminates future war-related supplemental spending bills by including a general provision requiring the Department to include all funding for both non-war and war-related activities in the President's fiscal year 2009 annual Defense budget request.