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For Immediate Release

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Johnstown, PA - Congressman John Murtha announced today that the Luzerne Township Sewage Authority has been awarded a loan and a grant by USDA Rural Development to cover cost overruns for a project serving 512 users.

A \$2,091,640 million grant and a \$353,700 loan will make up funding shortfalls caused by increased prices for PVC pipe, rebar, concrete and fuel.

The project will serve residents in the villages of Allison No. 1, Allison Heights, Kenney Row, the Luzerne Township portion of Merrittstown, Penncraft, Thompson No. 2, Tower Hill No. 2 and Winebrenner Avenue. The system will flow into an expanded Redstone Township Sewer Authority plant in the village of Allison No. 2.

"There are no functioning treatment facilities in the project service area," Murtha said. "These villages - along with downstream property owners, fish and wildlife - are constantly threatened by bacteria contamination from waste water lost by the outdated systems currently in use. This project will eliminate water pollution and environmental health hazards that have been plaguing the area for so many years."

The project consists of the installation of 26,344 linear feet of six-inch PVC sewer laterals; 41,548 LF of eight-inch, 10-inch and 12-inch PVC collection sewer lines; 10,652 LF of four- and six-inch PVC lateral lines; 4,700 LF of 1 1/2-, two- and three-inch force main; and construction of a three-pump station, a 130,000-gallon-per-day expansion of the Redstone Township Sewer Authority treatment plant and an office building.

Phase I of the Luzerne Township project, which Congressman Murtha helped to dedicate in 2004, serves users in LaBelle, Dutch Hill and Maxwell, as well as SCI-Western.