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## March 21, 2008 - Murtha Cuts Ribbon on Business Park Highway

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Murtha Cuts Ribbon on Business Park Highway

By Amy Zalar

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Calling it a great day in Fayette County, state Sen. Richard Kasunic joined a group of elected officials Thursday to cut the ribbon for the road that travels through the Fayette County Business Park in South Union Township.

"We're seeing Fayette County on the move," said Kasunic, D-Dunbar.

The featured speaker at the Matthew Drive Extension ribbon cutting was U.S. Rep. John P. Murtha, D-Johnstown, who said he was delighted to be there.

The thoroughfare of three-quarters of a mile, which travels between Fan Hollow Road at Route 40 and New Salem Road, provides access to the new Wal-Mart Super Center that opened earlier this year.

The Matthew Drive extension project was paid for with money from the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission, in addition to state and federal highway funding. A spokesman for Murtha said the congressman provided about \$1.4 million toward construction of the road.

"This is what America is all about," Murtha said. "I appreciate everybody and what they've done. I'm really amazed."

South Union Township Supervisor Robert Schiffbauer said the road leads to the \$54 million Fayette Crossing project, of which the Wal-Mart Super Center is a part, as well as Applebee's, Sonic and a collection of small shops.

Schiffbauer said former Fayette County Commissioner Sean M. Cavanagh told Murtha seven years ago that the business park was a priority and now it is a reality. Schiffbauer held up a newspaper clipping from March 16, 2003, showing Murtha on the property with only "shrubs, dirt and mud."

The Fayette County Redevelopment Authority owns the property and has worked to get numerous businesses to build at the park, including an engineering firm, doctors' offices, CareerLink, a motel, an Italian restaurant and the county Mental Health/Mental Retardation building.

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Schiffbauer credited freshman state Rep. Timothy Mahoney, D-South Union Township, with helping to clear up a wetland

issue with the state Department of Environmental Protection that was "literally going to kill the (road) project" before Mahoney took office.

Fayette County Commissioner Vincent A. Vicites said getting the road built was truly a team effort. He said there are still 100 acres left in the business park and the third phase that needs to be completed so it can be the "Southpointe of Fayette County."