

## July 3, 2008 - Murtha Participates in Waterway Infrastructure Briefing

BRADDOCK, PA &ndash; Congressman John P. Murtha, Chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense, joined today with officials from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Port of Pittsburgh Commission and local industry to present an update on the state of waterway infrastructure in Southwestern Pennsylvania.

Pittsburgh, the second busiest inland port in the United States, ships over 43 million tons of river cargo every year. This waterway transportation lowers the cost of doing business in Southwestern Pennsylvania, takes trucks off our highways, saves fuel consumption and supports 218,000 direct and indirect jobs. Making this happen is a set of 23 locks and dams on the Allegheny, Monongahela and Ohio Rivers in the Pittsburgh District.

&ldquo;Our region&rsquo;s vast network of locks and dams are absolutely essential for commerce, recreation, and in attracting future economic growth to our region,&rdquo; commented Murtha.

The Lower Monongahela River Project (Locks and Dams 2, 3 and 4) is a \$1.2 billion multi-year project that includes construction of a new gated dam at Braddock, construction of two new 84x720 locks at Charleroi, removal of the Elizabeth locks and dams as well as channel dredging. To date, Murtha has been instrumental in securing \$488 million for this project. The House Appropriations Committee last week approved an additional \$40.8 million for the Lower Monongahela River Project in fiscal year 2009. This funding was expected to be sharply reduced, but Murtha was able to convince the committee that full funding be provided for these crucial projects.

&ldquo;These particular Locks and Dams experience the highest volume of commercial traffic on the entire Monongahela River system,&rdquo; added Murtha. &ldquo;Two of these Locks are over 100 years old, and I have made it a priority of mine to ensure that the federal government provides the required funding to make necessary construction improvements.&rdquo;

In addition to supporting 218,000 direct and indirect jobs, the water transportation system in Southwestern Pennsylvania generates \$10.3 billion in local wages, \$1 billion in state and local taxes and \$2.2 billion in federal taxes.

Over the past 30 years, Murtha has secured nearly \$635 million for Army Corps construction and maintenance projects throughout Southwestern Pennsylvania. In addition, he has secured over \$550 million in sewage and water upgrades.

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