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For Immediate Release

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Windber, PA - Congressman John Murtha today visited an open house at Coherent Systems International's new facility here to see first-hand how partnerships formed by companies in the 12th Congressional District are creating local jobs and providing superior equipment for the nation's military.

Working virtually as one company, Coherent and Windber's Kuchera Defense Systems have garnered more than \$30 million in 14 prime contracts for high-tech tools for warfighters. Coherent designs, develops and tests the products, and Kuchera manufactures all or parts of them.

"Defense contractors in the district have discovered that one of the best ways they can grow their businesses is by working together," Murtha said. "They've learned they can't get higher-quality workmanship, better on-time delivery or more competitive prices anywhere. Coherent is a small business with high growth potential, and pairing its engineering expertise with Kuchera's widely recognized manufacturing skills is a natural fit."

About 35 employees work out of Coherent's new 50,000-square-foot facility at 99 Spruce St. Plans are to hire an additional 25 by the end of the year. The two Kuchera companies - Kuchera Defense Systems and Kuchera Industries - employ 325 and expects to add 25 by year-end.

Among the \$30 million in contracts is one with the Air Force under which Coherent developed, and Kuchera builds, a sophisticated electronic precision targeting and communications system that reduces the time between target identification on the ground and engagement from the air and reduces the likelihood of friendly fire events.

The device is one of the components of the Combat Operations Center, a mobile command, control and communications center developed by Coherent for the Marine Corps. Already in use in Iraq, the center contains all of the elements - including communications and intelligence systems and battle management tools - required for fast, reliable communications in a war zone. Kuchera produces more than 100 individual parts for the center, including mounting hardware, cables, harnesses, connectors and sophisticated electronic circuit boards.

Kuchera is the prime contractor on two contracts with the U.S. Special Operations Command for which Coherent provides engineering support - one for the Fast Rope, a system that significantly improves the safety and speed of inserting Special Operations forces from helicopters and Osprey aircraft into mission-critical zones, and another for the MicroGenSet, a diesel generator to power electronics and recharge batteries so small that it can be worn by soldiers.

"This facility further develops the seamless relationship we have with Kuchera, which provides significant manufacturing capability across these and other programs of cooperation between our two companies," said Rick Ianieri, chairman and

CEO of Coherent, which is based in Patuxent River, Md., and has 13 employees at its Uniontown office in addition to its Windber work force. "We're proud to be supporting the warfighters with these state-of-the-art technologies here in Windber, and we appreciate Congressman Murtha's support for these programs."

Bill Kuchera, CEO of the Kuchera companies, said, "The partnership with Coherent has reaped many benefits for Kuchera, and the relationship is growing every day."