

National Brownfields Coalition:

*The U.S. Conference of Mayors
National Association of Counties
Northeast-Midwest Institute
National Association of Local Government
Environmental Professionals
International City/County Management Association
Local Initiatives Support Corporation
National Association of Towns and Townships
National Association of Development Organizations
International Council of Shopping Centers
Community Revitalization Alliance
Center for Creative Land Recycling
City of Rochester
Colorado Brownfields Foundation
City of Trenton
New Partners for Community Revitalization
Florida Brownfields Association*

*The National Conference of Black Mayors
The Real Estate Roundtable
NAIOP, the Commercial Real Estate Development
Association
Environmental Bankers Association
National Brownfield Association
Cherokee Investment Partners, LLC
Trust for Public Land
Smart Growth America
Scenic America
City of Cleveland
Groundwork USA
National Brownfield Nonprofit Network Initiative
LOCUS, Responsible Real Estate developers and
Investors
Goldstein Brownfields Foundation*

April 2, 2010

James P. Moran (VA), Chair
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
Room B-308 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Michael K. Simpson
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
2441 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Moran and Ranking Member Simpson:

Re: Ensuring Adequate Funding for Brownfields Revitalization

As your Subcommittee prepares the Fiscal Year 2011 Interior and Environment Appropriations bill, we urge you to include the full \$250 million for the U.S. EPA brownfields program, which was authorized by the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act of 2001 (the "Brownfields Revitalization Act"). The President's proposed budget of \$215 million, a \$40 million increase, is a very positive step toward full funding.

Funds under this program are used to assess and clean up brownfields such as abandoned or under-utilized warehouses, inactive factories, gas stations, salvage yards, vacant lots, contaminated properties, and other eyesores that plague virtually every community. These properties cause blight to neighborhoods, inhibit economic development, pose risks to public health and the environment, and erode the tax base of communities.

The undersigned coalition of organizations represents thousands of communities and tens of millions of Americans who have been working during the past decade to promote the reuse of contaminated properties. Our coalition, together with federal and state government agencies, has demonstrated that a strategic combination of public and private investment can return brownfield properties to productive use.

By any measure, the EPA Brownfields program has been tremendously successful. EPA has invested approximately \$687 million in brownfields site assessment and cleanup, leveraging \$12.8 billion in cleanup and redevelopment dollars – a return on public investment of 18.7 to one. EPA’s brownfields program has resulted in the assessment of more than 14,600 properties and helped to create more than 60,200 new jobs nationwide. These impressive numbers only tell part of the story, as communities across the country report that brownfields projects are often lynchpins to spurring larger revitalization efforts, increasing local tax revenue, and bringing new vitality to struggling neighborhoods and communities.

While the EPA Brownfields Program has helped numerous communities, much remains to be done. Experts estimate there remain as many as 1 million brownfield properties nationwide. These sites continue to blight neighborhoods, discourage new investment, and undermine economic progress in many communities. Historically, EPA has been able to fund only about one third of the qualified applicants for Federal brownfields grants.

Consequently, we request that the Subcommittee fully fund EPA’s brownfields program at the authorized level of \$250 million for FY 2011. This modest investment will help hundreds of additional communities clean up and reuse thousands of contaminated properties, thereby bringing new hope and vitality to millions of Americans nationwide.

Thank you for considering our request to enhance EPA’s brownfields program, which is making a critical difference to communities across the country. Fully funding this program would enable more communities to return blighted property to productive use.

If you have questions or want additional information, please contact Evans Paull at Northeast-Midwest Institute at 202-464-4004, Judy Sheahan of the U.S. Conference of Mayors at 202-861-6775, or Ken Brown of the Ferguson Group at 202-331-8500.

Sincerely,

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cc: The Honorable David Obey, Chair, House Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Jerry Lewis, Ranking Member, House Appropriations Committee
Members of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior and Environment
The Honorable Henry Waxman, Chair, House Energy and Commerce Committee
The Honorable Joe Barton, Ranking Member, House Energy and Commerce Committee
The Honorable Edward J. Markey, Chair, House Subcommittee on Energy and Environment
The Honorable Fred Upton, Ranking Member, House Subcommittee on Energy and Environment
The Honorable James Oberstar, Chairman, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
The Honorable John Mica, Ranking Member, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
The Honorable Eddie Bernice Johnson, Chair, House Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee
The Honorable John Boozman, Ranking Member, House Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee