



August 8, 2011

The Honorable Jerry Lewis
US House of Representatives

The Honorable Adam Schiff
US House of Representatives

The Honorable Ken Calvert
US House of Representatives

The Honorable Lucille Roybal-Allard
US House of Representatives

The Honorable Mike Honda
US House of Representatives

The Honorable Sam Farr
US House of Representatives

Dear California Representatives to the House Appropriations Committee:

Re: ENSURING ADEQUATE FUNDING FOR BROWNFIELDS
REVITALIZATION IN CALIFORNIA

The undersigned organizations and California communities are asking for restoration of funding for the U.S. EPA Brownfields Program's assessment and clean-up grants to the FY 2011 level of \$100 million. As you know, the House Appropriations Committee cut \$40 million (40 percent) in brownfield grants which have proven invaluable to California communities that are struggling to cope with vacant, blighted, and contaminated former industrial and commercial properties.

Funds under this program, which was authorized by the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act of 2001, 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.

By the numbers, EPA investments nationally have produced:

- A total of more than 68,900 jobs (7.4 jobs per \$100,000 invested);
- \$17.39 of leveraged investment for every \$1 of EPA funds; and,
- 32 to 57 percent lower vehicle miles travelled relative to alternative growth patterns.

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. In Oakland an abandoned industrial site has been turned into mixed income housing, space for non-profits, and a park that includes a wetlands restoration project. In Visalia a contaminated site will house a new

civic center and park. In Anaheim a downtown affordable housing complex has replaced a long vacant manufacturing plant. The attached paper, "California Brownfields - Community Turn-around Projects," provides more detail on these and other examples.

The attached paper provides more detail on these and other California redevelopment projects made possible by EPA partnering with local governments to overcome key barriers and make way for new uses of unproductive land.

While the EPA Brownfields Program has helped numerous California communities, much remains to be done. In 2007 the Center for Creative Land Recycling estimated that there were between 150,000 and 200,000 brownfield sites in California. Because manufacturing has continued to decline in the intervening years, it is likely that the inventory has grown -- that is, new sites are being created faster than communities can address the old sites.

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. The need for enhanced federal funding is underscored by the fact that communities impacted by brownfields tend to lack the resources needed to make critical upfront investments.

Again, we request that California representatives support funding EPA's brownfields grants to communities at the FY 2011 level of \$100 million for FY 2012. This modest investment will help California communities clean up and reuse contaminated properties, turning blighted and abandoned sites into community assets and economic generators.

Thank you for considering this request. If you have any questions, please contact Evans Paull, National Brownfields Coalition (ev@redevelopmenteconomics.com, 202-329-4282; Evan Reeves, Center for Creative Land Recycling, (evan.reeves@cclr.org, 415-398-1080); or Lillian Henegar, California Redevelopment Association, (lheneagar@calredevelop.org, 916-448-8760).

Sincerely,

Stephanie Shakofsky, Executive Director Center for Creative Land Recycling	John Shirey, Executive Director California Redevelopment Association
Evans Paull, Executive Director National Brownfields Coalition	Ron Morrison, Mayor National City
Nora Davis, Mayor City of Emeryville	Bob Link, Mayor City of Visalia
William Spriggs, Mayor John M. Bramble, City Manager City of Merced	Aide Castro, Mayor, City of Lynwood

Christine Essel, Chief Executive Officer The Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of Los Angeles	Fred Blackwell, Executive Director San Francisco Redevelopment Agency
Janice L. Weinrick, Deputy Executive Director San Diego Redevelopment Agency	Walter S. Cohen, Director City of Oakland Community and Economic Development
James R. Rinehart, Economic Development Director City of Sacramento	Clifford W. Graves, Interim Executive Director Carson Redevelopment Agency
John Quiring, Project Manager Redevelopment Agency of the City of Fresno	Paul Schmidt, Executive Director Capitol Area Development Authority (Sacramento)
Darlene Williams, Deputy Director North Richmond Community Housing Development Corporation	Curt Haven, Economic Development Director City of Rancho Cordova
Carlos Martinez, Deputy Director Community Development City of East Palo Alto	Bob Nance, Economic & Redevelopment Director City of Tulare Redevelopment Agency
Tonya Dowse, Executive Director Siskiyou County Economic Development Council	Mitchell G. Lansdell, City Manager City of Gardena
Kathie DeRobbio, Economic Development Manager City of Brea	Cynthia Parker, President Bridge Housing Corporation
Erwin Washington, Co-Founder/Executive Director Lula Washington Dance Theatre	