

**U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Statement for the Record
Committee on Energy and Commerce
Subcommittee on Environment
United States House of Representatives**

May 19, 2017

The Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act, known as "the Brownfields Law", amended the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA or Superfund) by providing funds to assess and clean up brownfields; clarified CERCLA liability protections; and provided funds to enhance state and tribal response programs. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency supports reauthorizing the Brownfields Program consistent with the 2002 Brownfields Law; certain technical corrections could serve to achieve greater efficiencies in implementing the program.

The Committee's Discussion Draft includes important provisions that have the ability to: facilitate acquisition of property by governments exercising their function as sovereigns, clarify leaseholder interests and address the treatment of publicly owned brownfield sites. These changes, along with the allowance of reasonable administrative costs and the expansion of the EPA grants to include eligible nonprofit organizations, could promote additional brownfields redevelopment by a broader group of brownfield stakeholders and communities.

There are an estimated 450,000 – 600,000 abandoned and contaminated sites in the United States. EPA’s brownfield grants have led to a visible difference in communities across the country. As of May 2017, more than 124,759 jobs and \$24.3 billion of public and private funding have been leveraged. On average, for every \$1 EPA provided to communities, \$16.11 is leveraged. Further, 8.5 jobs are leveraged per \$100,000 of EPA brownfields funds expended on assessment, cleanup, and revolving loan fund cooperative agreements. According to an independent study, when brownfields are cleaned up, nearby property values can increase 5-15.2% percent within 1.24 miles of the sites.¹ In addition, the EPA analyzed data near 48 brownfields sites, and found that the cleanup of these sites generated an estimated \$29 to \$97 million in additional tax revenue for local governments in a single year after cleanup. This is two to seven times more than the \$12.4 million that the EPA contributed to the cleanup of those brownfields.

The EPA appreciates the opportunity to provide this written statement in response to Congress’s reauthorization efforts aimed at helping to transform our local communities by reusing more brownfield sites. The agency stands ready to offer our technical assistance to the Committee.

¹ Haninger, K., L. Ma, and C. Timmins. 2017. The Value of Brownfield Remediation. *Journal of the Association of Environmental and Resource Economists*, 4(1): 197-241.