



April 13, 2004

The Honorable Michael Turner
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Turner:

On behalf of The U.S. Conference of Mayors, I want to thank you for introducing the Brownfields Tax Credit Program legislation and to offer the Conference's endorsement for your proposal.

As you know, the Conference of Mayors has been working on the issue of brownfields redevelopment since the early 1990s. President George W. Bush signed into law legislation that we had sought for years that limited the liability for innocent purchasers and developers of brownfields sites and established an assessment and cleanup program at the Environmental Protection Agency to assist local and state governments to make these sites ready for redevelopment.

We have also supported and continue to support efforts made by Congress and the Departments of Housing and Urban Development, the Economic Development Administration and the other federal agencies to help local governments and businesses redevelop and locate on brownfield properties.

While we are very pleased with the progress that has been made, we also realize that federal resources are limited. If real progress is to be made to redevelop the estimated 400-600,000 brownfield sites throughout the nation, the private sector needs to be more engaged in helping solve the problem. The Conference of Mayors believes that your legislation is the next vital step that needs to be taken to more fully encourage the private sector, through tax incentives, to invest in brownfield properties and return these sites into the positive cash flow properties that they once were.

We also believe that your proposal will have a net benefit to the nation and the Department of Treasury through additional tax revenues and new jobs that will be generated. The Conference's "Recycling America's Land Report: A National Report on Brownfields Redevelopment, Volume IV" documents \$90 million in actual local tax revenues in just 45 cities and over 83,000 jobs

created in just 74 cities. It is estimated by 150 cities that between \$790 million to \$1.9 billion in tax revenues and over 575,000 jobs could be generated if their brownfields were redeveloped. Your tax incentive proposal has a tremendous potential for creating both revenues and jobs.

In addition, your legislation also addresses a key concern of local governments and that is the “mothballing”, or holding onto, brownfield properties by the current owner. Many current owners have not been motivated to release their properties due to the costs associated with cleaning up their properties and the liability associated with the property. Your legislation will provide the necessary incentive to encourage these businesses and property owners to take action and begin the necessary cleanup activities to redevelop these properties.

Thank you again, Congressman Turner, for introducing this much-needed legislation. We appreciate your efforts and look forward to supporting you in any way we can to get this legislation passed and signed into law.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James A. Garner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

James A. Garner
President
Mayor, Village of Hempstead