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U.S. Representative Maxine Waters

Representing the 35th District of California

Brownfields Redevelopment Enhancement Act

February 27, 2007

Rep. Maxine Waters [D-CA]: Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 644, the Brownfields Redevelopment Enhancement Act, a bill of which I am an original cosponsor. I certainly applaud the distinguished chairman of Committee on Financial Services, Mr. Frank, for working to get this bill to the floor. I also want to thank Mr. Gary Miller, who introduced the bill and who has been working on this subject for quite some time, as well as all of the other cosponsors of this bill.

The House passed a bill identical to H.R. 644 in the 109th Congress because many of us recognized the importance of preserving a means of remedying the numerous hazardous sites that remain in this country.

Under the Brownfields Act, the Environmental Protection Agency awards grants for the assessment and cleanup of sites that pose a serious threat to human health and the environment than sites addressed by the Superfund.

Many of these sites thwart the development and revitalization of communities in distressed areas of the country, including the City of Los Angeles and Los Angeles County. In fact, it is these sites that make development efforts impossible because of the potential risks.

The Brownfields Redevelopment Enhancement Act becomes a powerful economic development tool when used in conjunction with other Federal economic redevelopment resources, CDBG and section 108 loan guarantees. It is precisely the kind of leveraging tool that we must utilize to spur development in places where development costs are uncertain given the presence of hazardous materials.

The Brownfields Redevelopment Enhancement Act, if passed, will continue to provide four types of competitive grants: Assessment grants used as lanning tools by grantees to conduct due diligence related to the affected sites; revolving loan fund grants to capitalize the loans for the cleanup of the sites; cleanup grants that provide for the recipient to undertake cleanup activities; and job training grants made available to nonprofits and educational entities to develop environmental job training programs.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot afford to postpone passage of this bill any longer. It sends a bad signal to the communities across the Nation who are trying to rebuild, reinvest and strengthen their economic local economies. Any Federal tool to leverage private investment must be preserved, particularly in this pay-as-you-go economic environment. The Brownfields Enhancement Act is a tool, and therefore I urge my colleagues to support it.

Click [here](#) to see a video clip of the speech.

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