

## SUPPORT CITIES: **Modernize the Brownfields Program**

NLC calls on Congress and the President to reauthorize and modernize the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Brownfields program that will:

- 1 Clarify and expand liability protections for public entities that acquire contaminated properties but had no involvement in the contamination.
- 2 Authorize funding for multipurpose grants to provide greater financing certainty for large, complex projects.
- 3 Increase the technical assistance offered to communities.

### **Every EPA brownfields dollar spent creates \$17.79 in other investments.**

A brownfield is a property that cannot easily be redeveloped due to the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance. Brownfields are an economic missed opportunity and a threat to health and wellbeing in communities across the country. It is estimated that there are more than 450,000 brownfields currently in the United States. Redevelopment of these unproductive properties allows local governments to attract jobs and investment to distressed communities and address critical public health and safety concerns.

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), since the inception of the program, there have been over 24,000 assessments, over 1,200 cleanups completed, nearly 117,000 jobs created, and over \$24 billion dollars leveraged. But more must be done to make redevelopment a viable option for more communities.

One of the greatest challenges in brownfields redevelopment is the concern over legal liability, which discourages cities from acquiring and redeveloping brownfield properties. To address these liability issues and provide greater clarity and a higher level of protection for local governments, NLC urges Congress to clarify and expand liability protections for public entities that acquire contaminated brownfields sites where the public entity had no involvement in the contamination.

Additionally, NLC urges Congress to make changes to increase the program's impact on communities by increasing the overall funding authorization level; increasing the cap on the assessment grant amounts, whether site-specific or community wide; increasing the technical assistance offered to communities; authorizing funding for multipurpose grants to provide greater financing certainty for large, complex projects; and allowing eligible entities to use a portion of their grant funding for administrative costs.

## **For more information**

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