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## **Reps. Hall, Sweeney, Introduce HB519, Provides Long-Term Funding for State Brownfield Program**

COLUMBUS – **State Reps. Thomas Hall (R- Madison Twp.)** and **State Reps. Bride Sweeney (D-Westlake)** today have jointly introduced legislation creating a long-term, sustainable funding source for Brownfield Remediation, as well as the re-establishment of the Clean Ohio Council beginning in 2025 and beyond.

“Ultimately, Brownfield funding is about community revitalization,” said **Rep. Sweeney**. “With this dedicated funding, we can turn Ohio’s aging and abandoned industrial infrastructure into the economic engine of Ohio’s future, turn abandoned factories into community parks, and turn toxic waste sites into centers for new jobs & economic opportunity.”

Since 2021, the renewed Brownfield Remediation Fund has provided grant funding for 188 cleanup & remediation projects and another 125 assessment grants that were awarded funding in 83 of Ohio’s 88 counties. When the third round of funding for this grant program was opened July 2022, the application portal closed a week early due to oversubscription, demonstrating a robust demand for brownfield revitalization funding across Ohio.

This General Assembly recently reaffirmed the wisdom of this reinvestment with another \$350M in the last operating budget, and the most recent round of funding applications for competitive grants was accounted for within hours of the application portal opening.

“Our goal with this legislation is to establish a stable, long term funding mechanism for brownfield revitalization so the work of assessing and renewing these contaminated sites can continue,” said **Rep. Hall**. “This legislation will provide private developers and community planners confidence that program funding will continue to be available as they continue to invest in Ohio’s growth.”

Ensuring the long-term sustainability of the state’s brownfield remediation efforts has been a priority for the Greater Ohio Policy Center (GOPC) since the creation of the Brownfield Remediation Program (BRP) in 2021. Even before the BRP was created by the state legislature in the state budget that year, GOPC has been leading the efforts at the Ohio Statehouse to fund a brownfield remediation program after the former Clean Ohio Remediation Fund was sunset in 2013. That is why GOPC has worked with Reps. Sweeney and Hall to develop the legislation.

“Having a sustainable, dedicated brownfield program will ensure Ohio remains the leader in brownfield remediation for years to come,” said **Jason Warner, GOPC’s Director of Strategic Engagement**. “We are grateful that Reps. Hall and Sweeney have agreed to partner on this important legislation and serve as

leaders of the effort to remediate the state's thousands of environmentally blighted sites."

"Brownfields exist in every corner of the state of Ohio," said **Aaron Clapper, GOPC's Director of Outreach and Projects**. "It is oftentimes cost prohibitive for local governments to be able to afford the cost of remediating brownfields. Ensuring these resources are available long-term is a priority for GOPC, and a priority for the state of Ohio."

Brownfield remediation funding has the potential to positively impact every community in Ohio, from rural to urban communities. Brownfields are found in every county throughout Ohio, and state investment in brownfields will further help Ohio's communities tackle these blighted properties and put them to productive use.

"Brownfield Remediation isn't just the right thing to do, it's an opportunity to invest in Ohio's future," said **Rep. Sweeney**. "With these sustained dollars, Ohio will have the opportunity to finally retire the "Rust Belt" moniker for good."

"Helping communities across the state experience economic development that can lead to jobs, increased tax revenue, business development, and new housing must be a priority for the state," said **Rep. Hall**. "This bill will accomplish those priorities."