

## House Republican Press Release

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### State Rep. Berger and Waterbury Delegation Push for More Effective Brownfields Remediation



**Chairman of the Commerce Committee Jeff Berger (D-Waterbury)** today announced passage by the House of Representatives of a bill he authored, House Bill #7369, An Act Implementing The Recommendations Of The Brownfields Task Force.

“The passage of this bill is a culmination of many months of diligent work undertaken by the Commerce Committee in conjunction with the Brownfields Task Force,” Rep. Berger said. “I am pleased to have sponsored this important legislation as part of a Commerce Committee priority this session.”

“This bill is a great start toward putting people in place to address the many Brownfield sites in Waterbury. I look forward to working with the rest of the Waterbury delegation to utilize all resources to clean up these sites.” said Rep. Butler.

“This legislation expands the Brownfields Task Force, with the goal of remediating unsightly industrial sites and establishing vital uses for them,” said Rep Selim Noujaim, R-Waterbury. “Such goals are critical to solving the brownfields problem in the City of Waterbury.”

“This measure is of utmost importance to the City of Waterbury – especially many dilapidated locations within the 75<sup>th</sup> District,” Rep. Aldarondo said. “I am pleased to have been able to work and extend my sincerest thanks to all members of the Waterbury Delegation in support of this effort.”

“While the industrial history of Waterbury has made us known world-wide, our past has left us with a number of brownfields,” said Representative D’Amelio. “This bill is an important step in creating Waterbury’s new future.”

The bill expands the duties of the Office of Brownfield Redevelopment (OBRD) within the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) and provides funds for the OBRD for additional staff.

The DECD is authorized to provide different types and combinations of financing for investigating and cleaning up properties within available funds and allows the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to ask the Attorney General to bring a civil action to recover certain costs. Additional funding is anticipated to be appropriated with a final state budget for fiscal years 2007-2008.

A non-lapsing “Brownfield Remediation and Redevelopment account” is established to be capitalized with Urban Act bonds. Additional funds that can be deposited into the revolving loan fund include certain repayments of assistance, interest or other income earned on the investment of any moneys in the fund and funds brought about by any civil actions on behalf of the Attorney General’s Office.

A pilot program will be established within the DECD concerning priority funding for certain brownfield sites and the number of towns in the brownfield program will be increased. \$2.5 million has been allocated for fiscal year 2008 and \$3 million in fiscal year 2009 for the initial pilot program.

The Department of Public Health (DPH) must designate staff to act as a liaison with the OBRD. The DECD, DEP, DPH and Connecticut Development Authority (CDA) must enter into a memorandum of understanding concerning each entity's responsibilities with respect to the OBRD.

Rep. Berger serves the 73<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly District and is currently in his third term. He is Chairman of the Commerce Committee and serves on the Finance, Revenue & Bonding and the Judiciary Committee.