

these public housing authorities. This mandate is especially burdensome on our PHAs, our small ones, because they have few staff resources to devote to the annual plans. While HUD has taken regulatory steps to reduce the reporting burden for small PHAs, the plans still require much unnecessary paperwork and additional time.

Reducing the unnecessary paperwork and reporting will help smaller PHAs better serve their communities and focus on their mission of providing affordable rural housing to rural residents in need.

H.R. 3422 only addresses annual plans. Small PHAs will still complete their HUD 5-year plan.

This legislation also requires PHAs to continue providing their residents with opportunity to help set goals and policies for the housing authority and to continue to certify their civil rights compliance with HUD.

However, I would note that the intent of this legislation is for HUD to keep the annual certification process as simple as possible and not create additional requirements and additional reports for PHAs.

This is a small bill, but it has a positive impact on PHAs in rural areas in my district, and I ask the House that this much-needed, commonsense regulatory relief for small public housing authorities be passed.

As the ranking member said, one of the things that makes sense is when government oversteps its bounds, it is appropriate for government to step back in and correct those. I think this is a much-needed correction so that we can let these small public housing authorities focus on the tenants and not on the paperwork.

I thank, again, the chairman and the ranking member.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself some additional time to simply say, I appreciate what the gentleman from Texas said in closing which is to focus on the tenants.

I think it is important that we continue to pay attention to housing authorities. Too often, people slip into the mistake of equating homeownership with homes. Homeownership is very important, yes, to the sense that people are economically and other ways able to own homes, that is a good thing. But a large number of low-income people, through a variety of reasons, economic and others, are not going to own homes, and we ought to be clear that it is the right of people to a home that we want to work for or at least the ability of people to have a decent home.

In many cases, that will be homeownership. But in some cases, it will not be, and we want to make it very clear, as far as the public sector is concerned, we ought to have the same obligation to help people make the most out of their home, whether they are tenants or owners. This is an example of how we do that.

So I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time. I just want to, again, congratulate the gentleman from Texas for his leadership and the cooperation on the other side.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOOZMAN). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. OXLEY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3422, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 3422.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

BROWNFIELDS REDEVELOPMENT ENHANCEMENT ACT

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 280) to facilitate the provision of assistance by the Department of Housing and Urban Development for the cleanup and economic redevelopment of brownfields, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 280

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Brownfields Redevelopment Enhancement Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds that—

(1) returning the Nation's brownfield sites to productive economic use could generate more than 550,000 additional jobs and up to \$2,400,000,000 in new tax revenues for cities and towns;

(2) redevelopment of brownfield sites and reuse of infrastructure at such sites will protect natural resources and open spaces;

(3) lack of funding for redevelopment is a primary obstacle impeding the reuse of brownfield sites;

(4) the Department of Housing and Urban Development is the agency of the Federal Government that is principally responsible for supporting community development and encouraging productive land use in urban areas of the United States;

(5) grants under the Brownfields Economic Development Initiative of the Department of

Housing and Urban Development provide local governments with a flexible source of funding to pursue brownfields redevelopment through land acquisition, site preparation, economic development, and other activities;

(6) to be eligible for such grant funds, a community must be willing to pledge community development block grant funds as partial collateral for a loan guarantee under section 108 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, and this requirement is a barrier to many local communities that are unable or unwilling to pledge such block grant funds as collateral; and

(7) by de-linking grants for brownfields development from section 108 community development loan guarantees and the related pledge of community development block grant funds, more communities will have access to funding for redevelopment of brownfield sites.

(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this Act is to provide cities and towns with more flexibility for brownfields development, increased accessibility to brownfields redevelopment funds, and greater capacity to coordinate and collaborate with other government agencies—

(1) by providing additional incentives to invest in the development and redevelopment of brownfield sites; and

(2) by de-linking grants for brownfields development from community development loan guarantees and the related pledge of community development block grant funds.

SEC. 3. BROWNFIELDS DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE.

Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

"SEC. 123. BROWNFIELDS DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may make grants under this section, on a competitive basis as specified in section 102 of the Department of Housing and Urban Development Reform Act of 1989 (42 U.S.C. 3545), only to eligible public entities (as such term is defined in section 108(o) of this title) and Indian tribes for carrying out projects and activities to assist the development and redevelopment of brownfield sites, which shall include mine-scarred lands.

"(b) USE OF GRANT AMOUNTS.—Amounts from grants under this section—

"(1) shall be used, as provided in subsection (a) of this section, only for activities specified in section 108(a);

"(2) shall be subject to the same requirements that, under section 101(c) and paragraphs (2) and (3) of section 104(b), apply to grants under section 106; and

"(3) shall not be provided or used in a manner that reduces the financial responsibility of any nongovernmental party that is responsible or potentially responsible for contamination on any real property and the provision of assistance pursuant to this section shall not in any way relieve any party of liability with respect to such contamination, including liability for removal and remediation costs.

"(c) AVAILABILITY OF ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary shall not require, for eligibility for a grant under this section, that such grant amounts be used only in connection or conjunction with projects and activities assisted with a loan guaranteed under section 108.

"(d) APPLICATIONS.—Applications for assistance under this section shall be in the form and in accordance with procedures as shall be established by the Secretary.

"(e) SELECTION CRITERIA AND LEVERAGING.—The Secretary shall establish criteria for awarding grants under this section, which may include the extent to which

the applicant has obtained other Federal, State, local, or private funds for the projects and activities to be assisted with grant amounts and such other criteria as the Secretary considers appropriate. Such criteria shall include consideration of the appropriateness of the extent of financial leveraging involved in the projects and activities to be funded with the grant amounts.

“(f) DEFINITION OF BROWNFIELD SITE.—For purposes of this section, the term ‘brownfield site’ has the meaning given such term in section 101(39) of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (42 U.S.C. 9601(39)). Such term includes a site that meets the requirements under subparagraph (D) of such section for inclusion as a brownfield site for purposes of section 104(k) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 9604(k)).”

“(g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated for grants under this section such sums as may be necessary for each of fiscal years 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, and 2010.”

SEC. 4. CLARIFICATION OF BROWNFIELDS REDEVELOPMENT AS ELIGIBLE CDBG ACTIVITY.

(a) TECHNICAL CORRECTION.—Subsection (a) of section 105 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5305(a)) is amended—

(1) by striking paragraph (24) and all that follows through the end of the subsection and inserting the new paragraph (24) inserted by section 2(3) of Public Law 108–146 (117 Stat. 1883);

(2) by adding at the end (after the paragraph added by paragraph (1) of this subsection) the new paragraph (20) added by section 907(b)(1)(C) of Public Law 101–625 (104 Stat. 4388) and redesignating such paragraph as paragraph (25); and

(3) by adding at the end (after the paragraphs added by paragraphs (1) and (2) of this subsection) the new paragraph (21) added by section 1012(f)(3) of Public Law 102–550 (106 Stat. 3905) and redesignating such paragraph as paragraph (26).

(b) BROWNFIELDS REDEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES.—Section 105(a) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5305(a)), as in effect pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (24) (as added by subsection (a)(1) of this section), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in paragraph (25) (as added by subsection (a)(2) of this section), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon;

(3) in paragraph (26) (as added by subsection (a)(3) of this section), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(4) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(27) economic development and redevelopment activities related to projects for brownfields sites (as such term is defined in section 123(f)), in conjunction with the appropriate environmental regulatory agencies, except that assistance pursuant to this paragraph shall not be provided in a manner that reduces the financial responsibility of any nongovernmental party that is responsible or potentially responsible for contamination on any real property and the provision of assistance pursuant to this paragraph shall not in any way relieve any party of liability with respect to such contamination, including liability for removal and remediation costs.”

SEC. 5. TECHNICAL AMENDMENT TO ALLOW USE OF CDBG FUNDS TO ADMINISTER RENEWAL COMMUNITIES.

Section 105(a)(13) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5305(a)(13)) is amended by inserting “and renewal communities” after “enterprise zones”.

SEC. 6. APPLICABILITY.

The amendments made by this Act shall apply only with respect to amounts made available for fiscal year 2006 and fiscal years thereafter for use under the provisions of law amended by this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. OXLEY) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio.

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to see this bill on the floor today. The revitalization of brownfield sites has always interested me because Ohio has thousands of those underused or vacant properties. I was involved in writing the first brownfields legislation almost 10 years ago at a time when people were just starting to focus on what redevelopment could mean for jobs and cleaning up the environment.

Aside from the contamination at these sites, we found that there were legal and financial obstacles to redevelopment. After working on the issue for several years, Congress passed a major brownfields bill in 2001 that the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. GILLMOR) helped push across the goal line. That bill mainly dealt with EPA's programs.

The Financial Services Committee then started looking at making HUD's programs more effective, specifically the Brownfields Economic Development Initiative. At a hearing, we learned that many communities have been shut out of the BEDI, pronounced Betty, program because they cannot get a grant without going through the cumbersome process of applying for a section 108 loan. That is very hard on smaller communities. In fact, Mayor Lydia Reid from Mansfield in my congressional district testified that is an obstacle to getting redevelopment project off the ground and creating new jobs.

I applaud the gentleman from California (Mr. GARY G. MILLER) for introducing H.R. 280. It will bring needed flexibility to the program by delinking BEDI from the section 108 program. Communities will be able to apply for a grant if that is all they need to get a project going and bring in major private sector investment.

We can unlock a lot of jobs by getting a lot of these properties back to productive use. There are some 450,000 brownfield sites in every State in the Nation. By redeveloping these properties, we also reduce the stress being put on pristine green fields and farmland.

We have had good cooperation in our committees and with other committees in bringing this bill to the floor. A vote for H.R. 280 is a vote for jobs. I urge its passage today.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I know that our colleague from California (Mr. GARY G. MILLER) was en route here, and that is appropriate because he has been a major proponent of this bill. He and I have worked together on it.

What we do here is to frankly allow cities, municipalities, to do more to clean up brownfield sites. Surprisingly, initially we ran into some jurisdictional objections, I think based on turf, I guess, in this case, almost literally on turf, from some people who were kind of proponents of the EPA's role there.

I should make it very clear, to the extent that the Environmental Protection Agency can clean up these sites, wonderful. Mayors are not asking for the right to take funds for which they have a large number of demand and divert them into projects that would be otherwise done by the EPA, but there are occasions where we know the EPA does not have the money it ought to have.

I regret the fact that Congress earlier, the majority then in control, decided to end the taxation that we levied on the oil companies to provide funds for EPA. EPA has not got enough money, and we do not give it enough in the appropriations process. So I regret that, and I want to do all that I can to include it, but I do not want to tell a city because we have not given enough money to the EPA that the city is precluded from going forward cleaning up their brownfields.

I also want to talk a little bit about the public sector/private sector issue here. We hear a lot about the value of the private sector, and it is often put in the context of the private sector versus the public sector, with people being critical of the public sector. There are times when the public sector and elements of it do not do well. There are times when the private sector does not, but understand what we are talking about here.

Brownfields are overwhelmingly the product of private sector activity. Brownfields is a somewhat neutral term for ugly, messy stuff, pollutants, chemicals and other things that I guess turn the green grass brown, that turn the earth into an unpleasant situation.

The private sector companies that did that were not bad people. Most of them, a couple of bad people sneak in everywhere, but they really believed that it was their job to do it. They were producing various goods, and the processes used to produce various goods will sometimes produce pollutants.

What we have here with brownfields are situations overwhelmingly where a private sector entity made money by producing certain goods and then went out of business, moved away, moved overseas and left behind quite literally a physical problem in the city. What we are saying here is we are recognizing that the public sector has to step in and clean that up.

In some cases, under environmental law, we try to get private sector, responsible parties, to contribute, but

sometimes, they are not around to do that. They have not got the money. They are just not there. Let us be clear. This is a recognition of the need for a well-funded public sector operation to literally clean up the messes left behind by the private sector. This is an example in my mind of how in a rational society seeking the right quality of life, public and private sectors each will have an important role, and they will be cooperative.

I regret that fact that because we had a rule about no new programs that the pilot projects that would have allowed the Secretary of HUD to make some grants to explicitly combine cleaning up the brownfields with subsequent economic development on that cleaned-up site, that that was stricken from the bill. I know the gentleman from California has said, and I appreciate this, that he and I will continue to push for that. I hope that next year we may get that authorized as a separate bill.

What we are doing here is to free up any restrictions on the community development block grant program. One problem in the past was that if cities wanted to use their CDBG funds, they had to do it through a program called section 108 which required them to kind of roll their CDBG funds for many years. This allows them more flexibility. It allows us if we can get some appropriations into this to give them some money so they can also get things cleaned up.

It is, as I said, arming the mayors and local officials with a new set of tools to take areas of their city that have been despoiled by past private sector practices and make them available for the kinds of uses that will help enhance the quality of life, the economic and other kinds of activities in the city.

I just want to pay tribute here to the mayor of the city of New Bedford, Fred Kalisz, a long-serving mayor in the largest city in my district, who is leaving office in a few weeks. It was his advocacy to a great extent that called this issue to my attention, and he will be leaving, but I am very pleased that, as he leaves, we will be passing, and I hope soon the President will sign into law a bill that responds to one of the needs that he identified.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. GILLMOR), who I have had the pleasure to work with for many, many years, both in Ohio and here in the Congress. He has been a leader on the brownfields issue since we served together on the Energy and Commerce Committee, and we are pleased to have him participate not only on that committee but our committee as well.

Mr. GILLMOR. I want to thank the gentleman for yielding, and I rise in support of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, for the last 10 years, Federal involvement in brownfields

cleanup and redevelopment has been increasing, particularly since our Nation's mayors know that brownfields redevelopment efforts are proven, results-driven programs that have changed the way contaminated property is managed. What once began as an administrative pilot program has now blossomed into a major Federal grant program.

Simply having a brownfield, though, is no guarantee that the land will be cleaned up and redeveloped. When I introduced the legislation in 2001 that has now become our country's primary brownfields law, a major component of that measure was ensuring that Federal grant money was available to seed the development of those run-down properties.

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In fact, next to lingering liability concerns, the largest barriers that cities face when trying to acquire and redevelop contaminated brownfields sites was their lack of access to adequate and affordable capital to carry out critical brownfields activities.

This bill does not create a new program, but rather builds on an existing administrative program at HUD. H.R. 280 will increase access to brownfields redevelopment funds for America's more distressed and smaller communities through the Brownfields Economic Development Initiative; and, more importantly, it will couple this money with Federal expertise on community redevelopment projects.

Brownfields are both as a result of private and government activity, and in almost every case the activity which now needs to be cleaned up was legal when it was done. But it is important that we provide the resources so that we can redevelop these sites and bring back the jobs that once existed there.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute, and I appreciate the gentleman from Ohio making that point. Yes, a great many of these activities, probably most of them, were legal at the time. And I think that is an important point.

Society's mores change and customs change; and we are talking about, in many cases, businesses and, in some cases, government with waste disposal that were doing things entirely legal at the time, not fully cognizant of the consequences; and it sometimes falls to later generations literally to clean up.

These things were often things that were legal, not done by bad people, but people who were following the rules at the time; and I think it is fashionable to lament the deterioration of society all the time. This is an example, the whole brownfields approach of higher standards, of the decision of society today not only not to accept some of the things that used to happen but literally to clean them up.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY).

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me

this time and for his leadership on so many other issues. Bringing this to the floor took a great deal of work and conversations and negotiations and Mr. FRANK led that work in many ways.

I also want to really compliment the passion of GARY MILLER from California, who has introduced this legislation in a number of Congresses. Before coming to Congress, he worked in urban areas in redevelopment and knows the problem that brownfields can cause to localities in holding back economic development. He has been really devoted to passing it, and it has been my pleasure to work with him on this for three Congresses.

The primary purpose of this legislation is to increase the flexibility of the HUD Brownfields Economic Development Initiative, the BEDI program, and make the program available to more local governments.

This is a very important initiative, particularly for upstate New York, a former industrial area. Many manufacturing jobs have left and left behind contaminated brownfields. Our localities, our villages, towns and cities desperately need this money to clean up these brownfields and return these economic centers to economic growth.

The Financial Services Committee has reported this legislation out by an overwhelming bipartisan vote in the past two Congresses, reflecting the bipartisan consensus that brownfields clean-up benefits the economic development of our entire Nation. The legislation eliminates the requirement that communities applying for BEDI grants must pledge their Community Development Block Grant funding as security for the loan. This requirement puts local governments, particularly smaller local governments, between a rock and a hard place.

Since its inception, the larger brownfields program has proven to be an effective government response to a serious environmental problem, and it is important that we maximize its use. Brownfields spot our country from coast to coast, especially in areas with high or formerly high levels of industrial activity, especially urban areas. These brownfields locations have a potential for economic development, but they have been held back by the environmental problems created by former or current users.

New York City and State, and I am sure probably every State and city, is full of them. The EPA program has successfully used a variety of financial and technical assistance to restore these sites which would otherwise be doomed to further decay.

I am very pleased that we are moving this legislation forward today, but very disappointed that the BEDI program appears to be under attack from the administration. The budget the administration put forward this year would have discontinued the BEDI program at HUD and shifted its function to Commerce. Therefore, this bill is especially important this year to preserve

the very survival of the brownfields initiative.

I truly do want to thank GARY MILLER for his consistent and persistent leadership in introducing this legislation year after year and Ranking Member FRANK for championing it, along with his staff; and of course Chairman MICHAEL OXLEY for his leadership on this and so many other issues.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes.

The gentlewoman from New York reminded me that a lot of these things that are very broadly supported require money. And just as we have seen a cutting off of funding of the EPA, this administration, sadly, has been trying to cut back the funds for the brownfields program.

And indeed I have a rare opportunity in which I can congratulate the Appropriations Committee under the control of the majority because they had the good sense to reject a proposal by this administration to rescind this coming year's money for the brownfields program because they said they needed to deal with it to offset the problems in Katrina.

So this strong support for this brownfields program comes at a very good time, because it is a strong voice of support, I believe on a bipartisan basis, from the Appropriations Committee in repudiating that very ill-thought-out effort by the administration to rescind all of its money.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. HART), a former member of the Financial Services Committee, who has come back home to participate in this debate on brownfields.

Ms. HART. Mr. Speaker, I especially thank the chairman for his indulgence in allowing me some time on this legislation, and I am honored to be part of the Financial Services Committee argument today for this House bill 280, the Brownfields Redevelopment Enhancement Act, because it will make a real difference for communities throughout this country.

I was a Pennsylvania senator for 10 years; and while I was there, we passed a very forward-thinking brownfields bill that helped to provide more opportunity for development of brownfields without fear of liability. That is one step, and it was important for my State; however, on the Federal level, we have had a program in place, the BEDI program, which is a great program; but there are some impediments to many of our communities being able to utilize that program.

I am a cosponsor of this legislation because it will provide access to funding that is vital to restoring brownfields sites. It is going to improve the BEDI program and make it more practical for America's small cities and communities so that they can thrive.

My district is home to many of these communities that have small brownfields sites right in the middle of town. Revitalizing these sites is key to helping rebuild the economy of these small towns.

The significance of this development was highlighted recently at the U.S. Conference of Mayors in June 2003 when they did their survey. The cities that were surveyed noted that the creation of over 83,000 jobs through redevelopment in 148 cities was because of brownfields redevelopment. However, they also stated that nearly 600,000 more jobs could be created with more liberal use of monies through this program. In addition, by helping to reclaim these old sites, developers do not have to look to undeveloped land to locate businesses or residential properties.

One of the major hurdles to revitalizing these is financing. Unfortunately, this is especially true for these small towns and cities that I mentioned. These are the ones that are most eager to see these sites as host to new development. They face continuous hurdles, and this bill will help remove some of these hurdles.

These grants through BEDI could be a valuable source of funding to revitalize these towns and communities and lead to a brighter future that these towns envision. The program requires communities at this time, though, to take on additional debt. Many of these communities cannot afford to do so. The investment, though, in these communities would provide opportunities for them to grow and to grow their tax base and also add jobs.

I have heard from many in the communities I represent that we need to work to make BEDI grants more available. This bill would do so. By delinking section 108 loans from BEDI grants, H.R. 280 will provide this access to brownfields redevelopment and to this special program which works so well for small communities. It will make it work even better for the small communities in my district and across the Nation.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, in closing, let me again recognize a few individuals. GARY MILLER of California, the author of this legislation, has been just dogged in his determination to get this legislation passed. Unfortunately, his plane was delayed coming from California today and so was unable to participate in the debate.

I also want to thank PAUL GILLMOR for his dogged efforts on this, and I appreciate also the cooperation of the ranking member, the gentleman from Massachusetts, and Mrs. MALONEY for their efforts.

It has been 4 years since we began working on this legislation, and I have to say that these are the kinds of bills that do not get a whole lot of attention. They are not overly controver-

sial, but they do a lot of good. They will have a very positive impact on a lot of communities throughout the country.

We debate this under the suspension of the rules, so you will not hear a lot of hue and cry in the media about it. But at the end of the day, it is Congress at its best doing the kind of work we need to do.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. OXLEY. I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. I would just say that they have one other advantage: they are sufficiently uncomplicated to get the United States Senate to act on them.

Mr. OXLEY. I would echo that. And I am glad we changed the rules, by the way, that one can mention that body instead of referring to it as, quote, the other body.

In any event, this is meaningful legislation that we indeed want to pursue in the other body so that we can get this to the President. It has an enormous upside and potential for communities.

Governor VOINOVICH, when he was Governor before becoming Senator, had a commission which he commissioned in Ohio to study the loss of greenfields in the Buckeye State. One of the things that that commission found was that we could start the flow of that use of very productive farmland in Ohio by better cleaning up brownfields and putting them back to use.

So this bill is basically in that vein, and we think that this will go a long way in that effort.

Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 280, The Brownfields Redevelopment Enhancement Act.

I would like to thank Committee Chairman OXLEY, Subcommittee Chairman NEY, and Ranking Member FRANK for their leadership and assistance in ensuring this important legislation be considered by the full House prior to adjournment.

COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT

Brownfields are abandoned, idle, or underused industrial and commercial facilities where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination.

It is estimated that there are over 500,000 Brownfield sites across the country.

Brownfields represent more than just unproductive eyesores blighting individual communities.

They threaten our groundwater supply, cost our local communities jobs and revenue, and contribute to urban sprawl.

Brownfield sites hold tremendous potential for community revitalization. Many of these sites are strategically located in or around key areas of communities.

Redevelopment of these sites is both a challenge and an opportunity and returning them to productive use can serve as a catalyst for local economic recovery.

HUD'S INVOLVEMENT IN BROWNFIELDS REDEVELOPMENT

The largest obstacle cities face when redeveloping Brownfield sites is the lack of capital needed to carry out essential early-stage activities.

Because private financiers are often unwilling or unable to provide the funding to take a site through the full redevelopment cycle, local municipalities and local leaders find themselves confronted with the complex task of redevelopment.

The Brownfields Economic Development Initiative (BEDI) grant program was designed to help cities overcome this challenge.

The BEDI program helps communities to convert abandoned or underutilized sites into useful developments, thereby increasing the area's tax base and creating new job opportunities where none existed.

The BEDI program gives cities the opportunity to minimize urban sprawl and preserve existing green space by working with local developers and builders to utilize previously developed properties.

The program gives local communities a valuable tool to address blight, create new jobs, and expand their tax base.

BEDI IS DISTINCT FROM OTHER FEDERAL BROWNFIELD PROGRAMS

There is a clear and critical role for the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to play in communities' efforts to redevelop Brownfield sites.

Unlike Brownfields programs in other agencies, BEDI funds are targeted for use, with a particular emphasis upon redevelopment.

Further, HUD emphasizes that resources are to be used on projects and activities that will provide near-term results and demonstrable economic benefits, such as job creation and increases in the local tax base.

Funds are used as the stimulus for local governments and private sector parties to commence redevelopment or continue phased redevelopment efforts on Brownfield sites.

Brownfields funds under other federal agencies, such as the EPA, are more focused on environmental clean-up.

HUD does not encourage applications whose scope is limited only to site acquisition and/or remediation (*i.e.*, land banking), where there is no immediately planned redevelopment.

PROBLEM WITH CURRENT STRUCTURE OF BEDI PROGRAM

While HUD's BEDI program is an important tool for communities to redevelop Brownfield sites, in its current form the grant is difficult, if not impossible, for local communities to utilize.

If a local community wishes to pursue Brownfields redevelopment funds from HUD, they must first apply for a Section 108 loan.

In order to secure this loan, they are required to put up a portion of their Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) money as collateral.

The requirement that communities must obtain a Section 108 loan guarantee before they are awarded a BEDI grant has stymied the effectiveness of the BEDI program because it:

Makes it virtually impossible for small cities to access BEDI resources since they do not get their own CDBG entitlement grants from which to meet the required Section 108 collateral pledge.

Serves as a disincentive for small and mid-sized cities.

Discourages small projects.

Has proven difficult for many cities and counties to meet because of debt caps and concern that the addition of more Section 108 debt would jeopardize basic CDBG programs and services.

Without the Section 108 loan guarantee, cities are effectively locked out of the BEDI grant.

H.R. 280

H.R. 280 provides communities with the flexibility they need to finance Brownfields redevelopment projects.

It makes improvements to the BEDI program, ensuring that communities who have traditionally had trouble obtaining financing for Brownfields Redevelopment activities have access to needed capital.

Specifically, the bill authorizes appropriations for the BEDI program and eliminates the requirement that cities obtain Section 108 loan guarantees as a condition to receiving BEDI grant funding.

CONCLUSION

This legislation gives local communities a valuable tool to address blight, create new jobs, and expand their tax base.

With the flexible access to the BEDI grant program that this bill provides, we can help revitalize Brownfields sites across the country.

Cities have an opportunity to minimize urban sprawl and preserve existing green space by working with local developers and builders to utilize previously developed properties.

This bill will empower cities to take ownership of their Brownfields and work with their development community to design projects that utilize existing infrastructure.

Most importantly, it is estimated that more than \$2.4 billion in new tax revenues can be generated through Brownfields redevelopment.

Let's give cities access to the up-front financing they need to clean up Brownfields sites. I urge my colleagues to support this crucial legislation.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 280, which would allow the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to make grants to assist in the environmental cleanup and economic development of Brownfields sites.

I believe the Brownfields program is one of the most successful programs the Federal Government has to help revitalize urban areas.

These sites, typically in the heart of urban areas, lie idle because no one wants to incur the large costs associated with Superfund cleanups.

As a result, cities are marked by abandoned buildings and vacant lots while developers construct new buildings on what was previously open space in the suburbs.

Specifically, this legislation ensures that communities that have traditionally had trouble obtaining financing for Brownfields Redevelopment activities have access to needed capital.

Though small, these grants have served as seed money, enabling dozens of communities to leverage millions of state and private dollars to move into actual cleanup phase.

By reusing Brownfields sites we not only rebuild blighted communities, but also target development in city centers and avoid unnecessary urbanization on the fringes of metropolitan areas.

Mr. PASCARELL. Mr. Speaker, I want to express my strong support of H.R. 280, "The Brownfields Redevelopment Enhancement Act" and want to thank Representative GARY MILLER for shepherding this important legislation through the House.

This legislation will remove unnecessary obstacles from localities that are poised to transform abandoned or underutilized sites into clean, marketable properties. This type of re-

development is an important ingredient in the economic recovery of many areas—creating jobs, improving the quality of the environment and spurring the preservation of open space.

There are few issues that we face that have as much strategic potential as redeveloping Brownfields sites.

This redevelopment is not just about real estate—it is a jobs issue, a health issue, an environmental issue, a housing issue and an economic development issue.

A relatively small investment by the Federal Government will yield tremendous benefits for our country's social and economic well being.

The HUD Brownfields Economic Development Initiative (BEDI) is particularly valuable for neighborhood revitalization, since only BEDI funds are specifically targeted for use in economic development projects.

Unfortunately, current law requires that cities obtain Section 108 loan guarantees as a condition of receiving a BEDI grant.

This makes it difficult for small and medium sized cities to obtain BEDI grants since they are often not able to raise the capital necessary to meet the Section 108 collateral requirement.

Let the Congress pass this common sense legislation to remove the Section 108 requirement and unleash the vast economic potential that lies dormant in our cities across the Nation.

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SODREL). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. OXLEY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 280, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 280, as amended.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

□ 1630

DESIGNATING CERTAIN BUILDINGS OF CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4500) to designate certain buildings of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 4500

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. ROSA PARKS HEADQUARTERS AND EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER BUILDING.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The Headquarters and Emergency Operations Center building