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May 11, 1999

The Honorable John D. Dingell
U.S. House of Representatives
2328 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Dingell:

I am writing on behalf of the National Realty Committee to express our support for the Community Revitalization and Brownfield Cleanup Act of 1999. NRC members are America's leading real estate owners, advisors, builders, investors, lenders and managers. They have long supported enactment of bipartisan legislation that includes meaningful incentives for brownfield redevelopment.

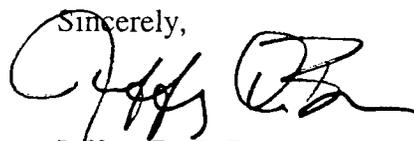
As far back as 1995, we testified at a field hearing you held in Dearborn, Michigan regarding the need for reforms to Superfund that would encourage the recycling of brownfields properties. At that hearing, we attested to the real-world value of two liability protections that would assure those parties purchasing contaminated brownfields properties that they have not also acquired unwarranted Superfund liability. These two incentives — prospective purchaser protection and clarification of the “innocent landowner” defense — remain critical today. In addition, they have the benefit of having enjoyed broad bipartisan support in the last three sessions of Congress. We are very pleased to see them included, once again, in today's proposal.

In addition, we have long advanced the view that legislation is necessary to address the issue of contiguous landowner liability under Superfund. We were then, and remain today, very concerned that some landowners may face the specter of expensive cleanup liability simply because hazardous substances have migrated onto their properties from adjacent sites. Your legislation clarifies the obligations of such owners in a way that will assist them in obtaining financing for, and otherwise pursuing the redevelopment of, such properties.

In addition, NRC has always emphasized the need to clarify the relative roles of state and federal regulators in addressing environmental cleanup issues. This is, perhaps, particularly significant when it comes to brownfields projects. We note that your legislation also recognizes this issue and anticipates that state cleanup programs will generally take the lead in this area.

In conclusion, we look forward to working with you to ensure that bipartisan legislation addresses these matters in a balanced and constructive manner. Certainly, the impressive list of co-sponsors for your bill should add to the momentum necessary to achieve this objective.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey D. DeBoer
President and Chief Operating Officer