



LITTLE HOOVER COMMISSION

April 22, 2003

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Executive Director

The Honorable Gilbert Cedillo
California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 3048
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SUPPORT FOR SENATE BILL 493

Dear Senator Cedillo:

The Little Hoover Commission supports SB 493, the measure you have authored, which encourages the cleanup and redevelopment of brownfields. The Commission's support is based on its May 2002 report, *Rebuilding the Dream: Solving California's Affordable Housing Crisis*.

In its study, the Commission concluded that urban brownfields are an undeveloped opportunity to make land available for affordable housing. Failure to redevelop these sites means that badly needed housing and community revitalization projects go elsewhere, but contaminated properties remain.

Like other states, the majority of California brownfields are located in low-income and minority communities. Current policies, such as unlimited liability, make it difficult for developers to restore these parcels to productive uses, particularly for housing. The Commission recommended that California should establish policies and incentives that prioritize the reuse of these contaminated sites.

SB 493 would promote brownfields redevelopment and revitalization in neighborhoods blighted by polluted properties. It would provide an incentive to purchasers of property with pre-existing pollution by providing limited liability protection. For these reasons, the Commission is taking an active support position on the measure.

As the bill moves through the committee process, I will write letters on behalf of the Commission to legislators urging aye votes. If you believe my presence and testimony at a hearing would be helpful, please let me know, and I will make every attempt to be available.

Sincerely,

James P. Mayer
Executive Director

c: Commissioners