

## House Republican Press Release

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### **REP. STRIPP SUPPORTS BROWNFIELD REMEDIATION BILL**



HARTFORD – State Rep. John Stripp (R-Easton, Redding and Weston) along with a bi-partisan coalition of Commerce Committee members hailed final House passage to prioritize its Brownfield remediation efforts on properties that have a development plan and would be beneficial to the municipality in which it exists.

Rep. Stripp said, “A new approach is needed to our State’s approach to Brownfields, including providing financial support and liability relief to municipalities, existing and future owners. The programs must first be made available to the community non-profits and regional economic development authorities. The state needs to be more user friendly for all parties – local communities, developers and existing property owners.”

The bill and compromise emerged based on the recommendations of the Brownfield’s Task Force. Legislators created the Task Force on Brownfields Strategies last year and charged it with recommending ways to create an effective brownfields program. Brownfields programs are used to help restore to economic usefulness to abandoned or underutilized contaminated areas. Most brownfields in Connecticut are located in cities.

HB-7369, An Act Implementing the Recommendations of the Brownfields Task Force, places the Office of Brownfield Remediation (OBR) with the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) and adds new additional standards that must be complied with to receive state funding intended for brownfield remediation sites, with an emphasis on the redevelopment potential of the sites.

Furthermore, the bill permits municipalities to reduce the assessment of property in need of remediation and then increase once remediated. It also allows the Connecticut Development Authority to establish a loan guarantee fund for eligible developers and property owners. Finally, it expands the current pilot program of the Office of Brownfield Remediation (OBR) from 4 to 5 municipalities.

Rep. Stripp added, “Returning Brownfields to productive uses is essential to returning our cities to economic health.”

The bill now awaits the signature of Governor M. Jodi Rell.