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STATEMENT OF GOVERNOR CHRISTINE TODD WHITMAN
ADMINISTRATOR
U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON
SUPERFUND, WASTE CONTROL, AND RISK ASSESSMENT
UNITED STATES SENATE

FEBRUARY 27, 2001

Good morning, Mr. Chairman, and members of the Subcommittee. It is my pleasure to appear before you in my first hearing as Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to discuss an important priority for President Bush and this Administration's brownfields legislation.

I commend Subcommittee Chairman Chafee and Senator Boxer, as well as Chairman Smith and Senator Reid for their leadership in introducing S. 350, the Brownfields Revitalization and Environmental Restoration Act of 2001. I am pleased to report that the Administration supports S. 350. As we continue a more thorough review of the legislation, we would appreciate the opportunity to offer refinements that would be consistent with the President's principles and budget. I look forward to working with all members of this Committee to move this important legislation to the Senate floor as soon as possible.

Brownfields cleanup is an important urban redevelopment tool that provides an alternative to development of greenfields. The Administration believes that brownfields legislation is important enough to be considered independently from other statutory reform efforts, such as Superfund. I know that some members of this Committee are interested in reforming Superfund and I am committed to working with them, but I would urge that Superfund reform issues not hold up passage of S. 350.

As you may know, President Bush is committed to strengthen state and local brownfields

programs based on the following principles which he put forth during last fall's campaign:

- ! Brownfields legislation should remove a significant hurdle to brownfields cleanup by providing redevelopers with protection from federal Superfund liability;
- ! Brownfields legislation should ensure that states have the authority and resources to run their own brownfields programs while ensuring those cleanups are protective of human health and the environment;
- ! Brownfields legislation should direct EPA to work with the States to ensure that they employ high, yet flexible cleanup standards, and allow EPA to step in to enforce those standards when necessary;
- ! Brownfields legislation should streamline and expedite the process by which grants are given to states, and in turn to local communities, so that they have maximum flexibility to use the funds according to their unique needs;
- ! The federal government should focus additional research and development efforts on new cleanup technologies and techniques to clean up brownfields; and
- ! While not under the jurisdiction of this committee, the brownfields tax incentive should be made permanent. The Administration supports legislative efforts to make the tax incentive permanent.

The States and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency have been at the forefront of encouraging the cleanup and economic redevelopment of brownfields. EPA has awarded more than 360 assessment pilots of up to \$200,000 each to states, Tribes, and local governments to assist them with brownfields redevelopment. Grantees report that EPA assistance helped leverage more than \$2.8 billion in economic development and generated more than 10,000 jobs. In addition, EPA has awarded \$32 million for Targeted Brownfields Assessments at more than

550 properties and has promoted local job training by awarding 37 Job Training and Development Grants.

However, much remains to be done to facilitate the rapid, high-quality assessment, cleanup and sustainable economic development in communities across the nation. With your help, this Administration is committed to providing the tools that communities need to address the problems posed by brownfield properties, and it is committed to encouraging redevelopment while fully protecting human health and the environment.

S.350 is a major step forward in encouraging the cleanup and development of a full range of contaminated brownfields properties. S.350 authorizes grants and loan programs to identify, assess, and clean up brownfields properties, and provides more flexibility to implement these programs.

In addition, S.350 clarifies Superfund liability for contiguous property owners, prospective purchasers, and innocent landowners. These provisions have achieved broad bipartisan support in Congress, and they represent an excellent way of encouraging brownfields redevelopment. S.350 also preserves the federal safety-net to ensure that cleanups fully protect the environment and public health.

This legislation also relieves the current program of unnecessary regulatory procedures for the Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund, and clears the path for expedited funding of cleanup of contaminated properties by providing grants to states and local governments. In addition, this legislation provides needed grant funding to the states, local communities, and Tribes, to support assessment, cleanup and oversight of brownfields properties. The legislation provides flexible authority to fund state programs in ways that will enhance the already impressive achievements of the 47 state programs that address brownfields currently. States with emerging programs such as Nevada and Wyoming will gain valuable support in their use of

creative approaches in encouraging protective assessment, clean up and redevelopment of property. States with established brownfields programs, such as Pennsylvania , Rhode Island, Ohio and New Jersey, will benefit from provisions that will enhance successful brownfields redevelopment work.

S.350 also supports funding for technical assistance, training, and technology to encourage the best methods and approaches to cleaning up brownfields. New tools that improve the ability to conduct protective and safe cleanups while reducing cost can speed the redevelopment of brownfields across the nation.

Whether states and localities receive Environmental Protection Agency grants for assessment and cleanup, Housing and Urban Development grants for redevelopment, Economic Development Administration grants, Department of Energy research support - or whether redevelopment is encouraged by the Federal Brownfields tax incentive - this Administration is committed to providing the tools necessary to address the problem of derelict brownfields properties.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today and to describe the President's support for brownfields legislation. I look forward to working with you to achieve swift passage of brownfields legislation. Mr. Chairman, I will be happy to answer any questions you or the committee members may have.