



David Kell, Executive Director  
Madison County Chamber of Commerce  
Madison County Community Improvement Corp.  
730 Keny Blvd.  
London, Ohio 43140

**David Kell, Executive Director of the Madison County Chamber of Commerce  
And Madison County Future Inc. Community Improvement Corporation  
House Bill 64: Ohio Developmental Services Agency Budget  
Interested Party Written Testimony  
Ohio Senate Finance-Workforce Subcommittee  
May 19, 2015**

Chairman Beagle, Vice Chair Williams and members of the Senate Workforce Subcommittee.  
Thank you for the opportunity to present this interested party written testimony on the  
Development Services Agency Budget, as part of the 2016-2017 Operating Budget (HB64).

My name is David Kell and I am the Executive Director of both Madison County Chamber of Commerce and Madison County Community Improvement Corporation. The Madison County Chamber of Commerce is an association made up of 300 members in our business community and the Community Improvement Corporation is the local economic development organization for the County and our local communities. Both organizations are committed to enhancing economic development in our community and collaborating locally and regionally to create new strategies that continue to enhance our region.

A vital component of future economic development relies on a healthy and sustainable environment for local governments, residents and businesses. Therefore, we have long supported the remediation and redevelopment of brownfields and other contaminated sites to create economic benefits and opportunities for local governments and communities throughout Central Ohio.

I was pleased to see that the Operating Budget proposes the creation of a Service Station Cleanup Fund (Sec. 610.20). Our organizations believe this program will provide critical dollars to create shovel - ready redevelopment sites by cleaning up old, unused gas stations in our rural, suburban and urban communities.

To make this program as effective as possible, and to utilize taxpayer dollars in the most fiscally responsible way, we support three recommendations for consideration in the Budget. Our organizations interested parties in believing that these proposed efficiencies will help maximize dollars and enhance the program's outcome, while retaining the original purpose of the program.

1. **Expand the definition of property owner** to include organizations that have entered into an agreement with a political subdivision. Organizations such as land banks, community improvement corporations and other nonprofits, and some private sector developers are more tolerant than local governments or financial risks and are better prepared to manage the challenges associated with these sites

2. **Clarify the definitions of cleanup or remediation** to include the acquisition of a class C release site, demolition performed at a site, the installation or upgrade of the minimum amount of infrastructure that is necessary to make a site operational after other clean up measures. Adding specifics to this definition will ensure properties are shovel-ready immediately and will not be abandoned halfway through the redevelopment process, due to the lack of final - phase remediation funding.
3. **Adjust the grant amounts for property assessment from \$500,000 to \$100,000 and cleanup from \$2,000,000 to \$500,000.** Gauging the appropriate costs in a program for environmental clean-up for ensuring projects are completed successfully and that projects are not over-subsidized. Average assessment costs for small sites like a service station usually range from \$50,000 to \$125,000 and cleanup and remediation of these sites can often be accomplished with \$250,000 to \$600,000.

Our organizations believe these three efficiencies will enhance the operations and impact of this imperative program. In 2013, The Greater Ohio Policy Center conducted an economic impact analysis of state funding used to cleanup and prepare contaminated sites for redevelopment. Greater Ohio is a nonpartisan think tank respected for their research. They found:

- For every \$1 of state funding invested in a contaminated site, the return on Investment was \$4.67 in new economic activity.
- For every 1 job created or sustained through remediation activities, 1 additional job was indirectly created or sustained.

We are very pleased to see a commitment by the state of Ohio to assist communities in priming sites That will directly support local governments and businesses in Central Ohio. However, in order for the program to be more effective, it is essential to broaden its scope. Central Ohio has much economic redevelopment potential locked-up in contaminated sites and remediating these locations will help future businesses thrive and create places where people will want to live, work and raise a family. We hope that the Service Station Cleanup Fund is the first of several programs that leverage the investments needed for these sites, which are located throughout our region.

Thank you for your consideration and please do not hesitate to contact me at 740-490-7547 or at david@madisoncountyohio.org with any question or concerns