

BURGESS & NIPLE

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Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee
Interested Party Testimony, House Bill 96 (Stewart)

May 14, 2025

Chair Manchester and members of the Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee, thank you for the opportunity to present Interested Party Testimony on House Bill 96, the main operating budget for fiscal years 2026 and 2027.

My name is Tom Mignery, and I am the Brownfield Director for Burgess & Niple, Inc., and an Ohio EPA VAP Certified Professional 125. I am testifying today to respectfully request the inclusion of continued funding for the Ohio Brownfield Remediation Program (BRP) in House Bill 96, the state's Main Operating Budget.

Other testimonies will have provided the statistics when it comes to the impact on property values and increasing the tax rolls for cities and counties. They are all true! **However, I am here to tell you the story of impacts on smaller communities and counties.**

Burgess & Niple's clients have been recipients of funds from the BRP. We have worked on projects in smaller counties such as Columbiana, Lake, Crawford, Seneca, Shelby, Morrow, Darke, Preble, Butler, Lawrence, Mercer, Morgan, and Noble. I have personally witnessed the palpable change in the community when a brownfield is assessed and cleaned up in terms of the adjacent neighbors be so happy and some in tears, when the old Wagner facility in Sidney Ohio is properly demolished and their children don't have to look at the monstrosity of an abandoned factory.

Moreover, I become distressed when I hear that the funding is going to be reduced or that ODOD will continue to receive applications on a "first come first served" basis. The smaller counties cannot "compete" with Cuyahoga or Lucas, Hamilton or Stark. I have firsthand experience in working in Cuyahoga County working on the National Acme Site and several others - THEY NEED IT!! However, the \$2 Million allocation to Cuyahoga will not mean as much to Cuyahoga as the \$2 Million going to Preble County!! Please exert some influence and make the next round an identified allocation for each county versus a "free for all" first come first serve for smaller counties.

Clearly when the ODOD application portal is closed within 3 hours as it was several months ago for the latest round of brownfield funding, there is a need for brownfield funding!!!

This is why it is critical to continue funding for the Brownfield Remediation Program for at least the next two years. As someone who is directly involved in this work, I strongly believe it is imperative for Ohio to adopt three modest changes to help ensure that Ohio can maintain its competitive advantage as a great place to do business.

Please join your colleagues in the House and support continuation of funding for the Brownfield Remediation Program in House Bill 96. This investment will unlock untold potential on the 9,000 plus former commercial and industrial brownfield sites across, while preserving agricultural land and green space from unnecessary development.

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Chair Manchester and members of the Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide interested party testimony and to share our views on brownfield revitalization in Ohio. We appreciate your continued support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'T. Mignery', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Thomas J. Mignery
Ohio EPA VAP CP 125