

Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee  
Interested Party Testimony, House Bill 96 (Stewart)  
Lindsay Crow, National Real Estate Market Leader, Associate Vice President, Verdantas  
Wednesday, May 14, 2025

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

My name is Lindsay Crow and I am the National Real Estate Market Leader with Verdantas. I am providing this testimony to respectfully request the inclusion of continued funding for the Ohio Brownfield Remediation Program in House Bill 96, the state's Main Operating Budget.

Verdantas is a full-service consulting company in the environmental, water, and energy transition infrastructure markets. In the state of Ohio, we employ six Ohio Voluntary Action Program Certified Professionals dedicated to Ohio's brownfield program. For more than 30 years, we have been leaders in Ohio's brownfield assessment, remediation, and redevelopment efforts, directing hundreds of Ohio Voluntary Action Program projects since the program's inception.

The Ohio General Assembly created the Brownfield Remediation Program in 2021 with an initial appropriation of \$350 million. Two years later, lawmakers renewed the program with a second appropriation of \$350 million. To date, the program has been responsible for the clean-up or assessment of more than 600 brownfield sites in 86 of Ohio's 88 counties. Importantly, 285 of these projects are underway in counties with a population of fewer than 70,000 people, and 355 are in counties with a population of less than 150,000. These results not only show that brownfields are indeed a statewide problem but also show that there are opportunities for new economic development and revitalization in every region of Ohio.

Verdantas helped our public and private sector clients and Land Banks prepare 11 applications requesting \$9.9 million in the last round of funding currently under review by ODOD. We helped Land Banks and other applicants prepare 41 successful Brownfield Remediation Program applications since 2021, securing \$119 million in grant awards. Many of these properties are in prime locations and will soon have thriving new uses that will provide significant investments, new jobs, new housing units, and venues that will improve the quality of life for Ohio residents.

The House-passed version of House Bill 96 includes \$125 million in each fiscal year for continued support of the Brownfield Remediation Program. We are grateful that the House recognized the importance of this program to Ohio and maintained funding for the next two years. We ask that the Senate join the House in continuing to support this program at the same level of support for fiscal years 2026 and 2027.

The strong progress made over the past four years has just barely scratched the surface of what is needed to address brownfield remediation in Ohio. We ask that you support continuation of funding for the Brownfield Remediation Program in House Bill 96. This investment will preserve the state's valuable agricultural land and green spaces while attracting new businesses; generating significant revenue; and creating quality jobs, housing, and new opportunities for Ohioans.

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



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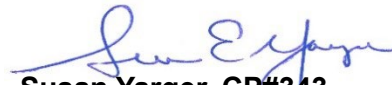
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