



MONROE COUNTY
LAND BANK
REVITALIZE. REPURPOSE. RENEW.

Monroe County Land Bank
101 N. Main Street, Room 21
Woodsfield, OH

March 29, 2023

House Finance Committee
Rep. Jay Edwards, Chairman
77 S High Street
Columbus, OH 43215

Chairman Edwards, Vice Chairman LaRe, Ranking Member Sweeney and members of the House Finance Committee: I want to thank you for allowing me the opportunity to submit interested party testimony on House Bill 33.

My name is Taylor Abbott, Treasurer of Monroe County and chairman of the Monroe County Land Bank. On behalf of my constituents and the many land banks around our state, I am here today to encourage your committee to provide an additional \$350 million to the Building Demolition and Site Revitalization program and an additional \$150 million to the Brownfield Remediation program in the FY 2024-25 budget.

In August, 2021 the Monroe County Land Bank was formed through my office in order to address the issue of blighted and abandoned properties within our county.

With the grant funding made available through the Brownfield Remediation program and the Building Demolition and Site Revitalization program in the State's 2022-23 FY budget, our land bank was successful in aggressively pursuing and securing over \$9.5 million for purposes of demolishing and remediating both private and commercial properties.

Through the Building Demolition and Site Revitalization program, we were able to successfully demolish 27 properties on behalf of landowners who partnered with the land bank. As a result, many villages around the county were positively impacted by the remediation of these structurally and environmentally unsafe buildings. With each completed demolition, our villages and county were made safer and more attractive.

Likewise, the Monroe County Land Bank, in partnership with the Monroe County Port Authority, was successful in securing more than \$9 million from the Brownfield program, second only to Cuyahoga County. The program provided the necessary funding to address three major sites, including two long-time dilapidated schools and the former Ormet Aluminum Corporation site. Now known as Long Ridge Energy, the property is our county's largest

commercial and one of the state's premier sites offering road, river, and rail access.

The ongoing work being completed at Long Ridge Energy will serve to further help attract new businesses to the commercial site by improving the overall safety and functionality of the property. Additionally, the remediation of subterranean concrete can provide a clean canvas for new manufacturing or businesses to operate and expand, ultimately making the property more attractive to potential investors and tenants.

Due to the overwhelming success of Monroe County's Land Bank program, we are already looking ahead at additional sites and properties that we hope to address over the next year.

The invaluable work of land banks around the state is critical in helping reduce crime rates and stabilize property values. Additionally, their work further incentivizes new businesses and investments to the region by opening up sites for development. As a result, those positive contributions and effects further support the overall economic growth and well-being of Ohio's communities.

In light of the significant benefits that Ohio land banks are bringing to the economic growth and development of communities, I respectfully urge this committee to approve an additional \$500 million in the upcoming budget to support the Brownfield Remediation and Building Demolition programs.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Taylor G. Abbott,
Monroe County Treasurer
Monroe County Land Bank Chair