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BUILD Act moves through Senate committee

Smart Growth America applauds progress to reauthorize EPA Brownfields program

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Washington, DC—This morning, the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works voted unanimously to pass the Brownfields Utilization, Investment, and Local Development (BUILD) Act of 2013. The bill will now proceed to the full Senate for a vote.

The BUILD Act would help communities across the country clean up contaminated land by reauthorizing the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Brownfields program. Countless communities have used the program to bring blighted and contaminated sites back into reuse, and many more would be able to do the same in the future with this legislation.

Last year, Chairman Tom Udall (D-NM) and Ranking Member Mike Crapo (R-ID) of the Subcommittee on Superfund, Toxics and Environmental Health held a hearing on the benefits of brownfields development. In a testimony before the subcommittee last year, Smart Growth America President and CEO Geoff Anderson said, "The private sector is now more ready than ever to put capital behind cleanup and redevelopment. It makes economic and fiscal sense."

During today's committee hearing, both Chairman Barbara Boxer (D-CA) and Ranking Member David Vitter (R-LA) spoke about the excellent bipartisan work that went into this bill. Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ) recognized his predecessor, the late Senator Frank Lautenberg, for championing this issue along with Senators Inhofe (R-OK), Udall (D-NM), and Crapo (R-ID). Senator Booker recognized the EPA Brownfields program as an economic development tool, with approximately \$18 being leveraged for each dollar of federal investment in assessment and cleanup.

One amendment was made to the bill that would create a set-aside for rural and disadvantaged communities.

Smart Growth America is the only national organization dedicated to researching, advocating for and leading coalitions to bring better development to more communities nationwide. From providing more sidewalks to ensuring more homes are built near public transportation or that productive farms remain a part of our communities, smart growth helps make sure people across the nation can live in great neighborhoods. For additional information visit www.smartgrowthamerica.org.

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