

Written Testimony

House of Representatives-Commerce Committee Hearing

November 27, 2012, 2012

Submitted by Kara Wood, Economic Development Director, City of Grand Rapids

- Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 1210.
- The City of Grand Rapids has supported the state's brownfield redevelopment program from its inception and its recent past amendments.
- The legislation before you provides for continuation of the Brownfield Redevelopment Program which communities like Grand Rapids have participated in since 1994 to offer incentives for businesses and property developers to revitalize properties that are contaminated, functionally obsolete and blighted.
- This program has provided for the streamlining of application and approval processes to help developers close deals.
- Over the life of the program, Grand Rapids has benefited from kick starting over \$1.2 billion in private and public investment from 99 projects and resulted in over 8,500 new jobs and/or residents.
- We have used the success of the program to leverage over \$2M of federal Environmental Protection Agency funds to assist brownfield projects.
- The Grand Rapids Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (GRBRA) is now administering 37 active Act 381 Work Plans that involve the reimbursement of state and local tax increment revenues.
- We are committed to pursuing job creation and private investment and will do that by pursuing new brownfield projects.

- This bill will add a provision to the Act to allow urban stormwater management systems as an eligible activity, which we support and look forward to working on the administrative policy with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation and Michigan Department of Environmental Quality. We would like to see the rules further defined as functioning greenroofs, grey water cistern systems, rain gardens and ... every drop of stormwater dealt with privately is a drop we don't need to deal with publically.
- The City of Grand Rapids would like to thank you for your interest and efforts in trying to help local government with furthering economic development programs that have major impact on our future as a state.
- Thank you again for your work on this issue. This program is a job generator for Michigan and the City stands ready to assist you and your staff in any way as action on this important economic development program moves forward.