

Thank you, Mr. Chairman for the invitation to appear before your committee on this important package of reforms bills that will both help to protect our environment and stimulate our economy.

First, I want to acknowledge the commitment that you and your House colleagues have made to this package and at the same time, the work that Bill Rustem and Public Sector Consultants and all the stakeholders have done in helping to frame in the many issues involved in the reform of our state's cleanup law.

Bill had indicated earlier in our committee that if we could complete the work on our state's cleanup laws, that this reform would be another legacy-type accomplishment that will help to direct the state's future well into the next generation. With the recent Senate passage of these bills and now getting the chance to appear before your committee, we have all taken a significant step toward completing this effort and will soon be able to help our citizens to truly move forward with cleaning up our state and at the same time harnessing the tremendous economic powers that redevelopment can provide in helping to jump start our state's economy.

Second, I'd like to thank my colleague, Senator Jason Allen for introducing the cornerstone of this package and shepherding through the early work in this important area of needed reform for the people of this state.

I'd also like to thank all of the many workgroup members who have helped to get our legislation ready before your committee. I'd especially like to acknowledge the key DNRE staff, Lynelle Marolff and Jim Sygo. I'd like you all to know that this package is the result of a broad, multi-sector workgroup representing business interests, environmental concerns, local units of government, cleanup consultants and utilities and many more.

What you have before you today is one of the most detailed and complicated pieces of environmental policy that I have worked on in my 8 years in the Senate. The legislation will streamline the cleanup process, make it more consistent with federal practices to help in uniformity, provide new avenues of appeals for persons that are not satisfied with DNRE decisions and help local units of government and

cleanup companies in pursuing cleanups throughout the state. We have added key concepts that will lead to more self-implemented cleanups, more efficient use of precious department resources and new methods of revitalizing brownfields—while still protecting our natural resources much more so than we are able to do today.

So, in closing, much like I have said in other key environmental packages—the Compact, wetlands reform and state park funding, it has been a real pleasure working with my colleagues across the aisle and across the Chamber to fashion a package of bills that will protect our environment and stimulate our economy. It has certainly been a fruitful dialogue that has helped to shape this package.

Thank you and I look forward to this important package sent to the House floor by your committee members. Michigan and its citizens need these reforms now!