



**COMMERCE COMMITTEE**  
**March 1, 2016**

The Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) is Connecticut's statewide association of towns and cities and the voice of local government - your partners in governing Connecticut. Our members represent over 96% of Connecticut's population.

**HB 5425      "An Act Authorizing the Creation of a Connecticut Brownfield Land Banks"**

CCM supports **HB 5425, which would create Connecticut Brownfield Land Banks** with the purpose to acquire, remediate and redevelop brownfields and adjacent properties.

CCM supports the ongoing efforts to remediate and redevelop identified brownfields in order to make them economically viable and return them to local tax rolls. Brownfields continue to plague towns and cities across the state, these properties hamper economic development and lower property values.

The Brownfield Land Banks created by HB 5425 would seek to acquire, retain, remediate and sell brownfields in the state on behalf of municipalities pursuant to land banking agreements with such municipalities, and educate and assist local officials, community leaders, economic development agencies and nonprofit organizations on best practices for redeveloping brownfields.

Additionally these Land Banks would seek to maximize and leverage local, state, federal and private investments for the remediation and redevelopment of these brownfields. Given the current strain on both State and local budgets, the ability to maximize and coordinate private investments is vital to returning these blighted properties to municipal grand lists.

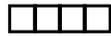
HB 5425 would extend needed liability protection for entities attempting to remediate these properties and not hold them liable for existing conditions caused by no fault of their own. These protections are needed to encourage investment and the lack of liability protection has long cast a chilling shadow over these properties discouraging their acquisition and clean up.

CCM does have concerns with Section 5 which would exempt any the real properties and operations of a Connecticut Land Bank from "taxation of every kind by the state and by municipalities". This blanket and seemingly open ended tax exemption may dissuade towns and cities from entering into an agreement with a Land Bank, and CCM would encourage the

Committee to allow the parameters of any local tax exemption to be negotiated between by the Land Bank and the host community.

Furthermore, CCM would ask the Committee to clarify the responsibilities of a Land Bank that fails to meet the obligations of its agreement with a town or city or if it is decertified by the Department of Economic and Community Development.

CCM looks forward to working with the Committee and DECD to address the concerns raised above and asks the Committee to **favorably report HB 5425**.



If you have any questions, please contact Randy Collins, Advocacy Manager of CCM at [rcollins@ccm-ct.org](mailto:rcollins@ccm-ct.org) or (860) 707-6446.

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