

# Town of Berlin

## Department of Economic Development

March 2, 2021

Environment Committee

RE: Bill 6496

Senator Cohen, Representative Borer, Senator Slap, Representative Gresko, Senator Minor, Representative Harding and Esteemed Members of the Environment Committee:

I am the Economic Development Director for the Town of Berlin, and an advocate of creative re-use of properties as well as non-traditional solutions to move communities ahead. I am speaking today in favor of Bill 6496.

With the support of this Committee, Governor Malloy and Governor Lamont, the State of Connecticut has invested close to \$500 million into brownfield assessment and remediation in the last 10 plus years. This has brought many properties from blighted and vacant to vibrant and again paying taxes. This has been a wonderful thing, but with environmental redevelopment, contaminated soil is not just a reality, but what to do with it becomes a major undertaking. Trucking it out of state is a costly venture and makes some projects untenable.

Bill 6496 would create a pilot program for the reuse of treated soils in industrial and commercial zones. It will provide the State of Connecticut and firms within our state to be able to reuse this soil as fill. This soil would be properly treated so that it is within DEEP guidelines. The cost of this treated soil is much less than clean fill, which is the only option now for projects.

This bill has the support of the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and is actually one of the bills they prioritized for this session.

In Berlin, we have been working with a developer for almost 3 years on a few properties encompass over 70 acres of land, are industrially zoned, have environmental contamination and are presently over \$250,000 in arrears for property taxes. This firm has already received approval from our Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission for a plan to raise portions of the site above the flood plain, remediate the contamination, create new wetlands on the property and provide flat land for an industrial park.

I ask for your assistance to move this legislation to the floor as it could benefit communities throughout the state, not just Berlin. Soil reuse is a logical additional step that would save money by allowing treated soil to remain here in Connecticut for beneficial re-use rather than being shipped out of state.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Christopher D. Edge  
Economic Development Director

Visit our Web Site <http://www.town.berlin.ct.us>

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