



The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

January 11, 2017

Dear Governor Cuomo:

The Brownfield Coalition of the Northeast (BCONE) is aware that new grants to communities are now available from the Brownfield Opportunity Areas (BOA) Program. BCONE, a multi-state non-profit organization with the mission to provide education on the benefits of brownfield remediation and sustainable redevelopment and to work with member states, including New York State, and brownfield stakeholders to facilitate brownfield cleanups within member states. BCONE members have extensive experience in the brownfield remediation and redevelopment process and include state regulatory agencies and brownfield practitioners in the fields of environmental remediation; land use consulting, real estate, law, land development, and green jobs training programs that supply well-trained, accredited, and certified entry-level technicians for a variety of brownfield and green energy jobs.

BCONE representatives from CT, DE, NJ, PA and RI are impressed with the New York State BOA program and the State's tax credit model. BCONE is writing to thank you for re-funding the BOA program, and to let you know how important it has been to communities that are not yet able to compete for larger economic development assistance. All states in the BCONE organization view New York State's BOA funding as a model to help ensure that low-income communities and communities of color that are suffering from blight can become competitive.

The industrial states have suffered with historic environmental contamination for decades; but thanks to New York's Brownfield Cleanup Program and associated Brownfield Tax Credits as reformed under your administration, New York is admired by all of BCONE for cleaning up the brownfields that scar urban centers. Still, the otherwise highly effective tax credits are not enough to attract development in some of New York's poorer and most blighted communities. This is why the BOA program is an essential piece of the larger brownfield strategy. A study recently conducted by NYU Wagner School Graduate students has demonstrated that it is succeeding by giving these communities the tools they need to create realistic paths to greater economic viability.

BCONE understands that the \$2 million dollars allotted for BOA grants in the current budget year will go to communities that are already in the program and are working toward official designation, which will make their brownfield sites eligible for enhanced tax credits. This makes sense, but we also suggest that the program be reinvigorated to a degree that would allow for new communities to seek BOA status. And for those communities that have received, or are soon to receive, designation, BCONE urges that your administration make changes to the budget and the law that would assist BOAs beyond planning. With grant assistance for pre-development tasks such as design work and zoning changes and marketing, BOA communities will be in a position to attract and work with developers in accomplishing key projects.

Again, BCONE commends you for supporting New York State's poorest communities in their efforts to revitalize and clean up historic contamination. Without the BOA program, many of them would be left behind, as your economic development programs are transforming the New York.

As BCONE President, I am speaking for the representatives in our organization from municipalities, other states in the region, builders and community leaders across the Northeast in encouraging a larger commitment for this unique program that we all view as exemplary.

Sincerely,

Steve Jaffe
President, Brownfield Coalition of the Northeast