



ALBERTA
DEPUTY PREMIER
MINISTER OF FINANCE



AR#13576

May 17, 2005

Mr. Eugene Nyberg
Acting Executive Director and CEO
National Round Table on the Environment & the Economy
344 Slater Street, Suite 200
Ottawa ON K1R 7Y3

Mr. Angus Ross, Chair
Advisory Panel
Canadian Brownfields Network
344 Slater Street, Suite 200
Ottawa ON K1R 7Y3

Dear Mr. Nyberg and Mr. Ross:

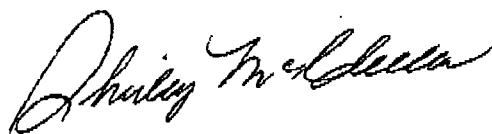
Thank you for forwarding the report of the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy (NRTEE) on the removal of Crown liens and tax arrears from brownfield sites.

In certain cases, the removal of Crown liens and tax arrears may facilitate the redevelopment of abandoned sites that lack a financially viable owner. However, as the report notes, the scope of such relief needs to be carefully defined to avoid triggering additional abandonment and non-payment of taxes on these sites by the owners. As well, the criteria for relief would need to ensure that the primary beneficiary is the potential developer, not a former or current owner responsible for the contamination or tax arrears. More generally, governments need to ensure that any changes address the key barriers to redevelopment – if other issues such as regulatory or liability concerns are more important, fiscal incentives may not have the desired impact.

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These are complex issues, and your discussion paper provides an important starting point for discussion. Several Alberta government ministries are examining issues related to contaminated sites and abandoned properties, in particular through the Contaminated Sites Stakeholder Advisory Committee. I will forward this report to my ministerial colleagues in Alberta Environment and Municipal Affairs, and will continue to discuss with them progress on these issues.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Shirley McClellan".

Shirley McClellan
Deputy Premier and Minister

cc: Honourable Guy Boutilier
Minister of Environment

Honourable Rob Renner
Minister of Municipal Affairs