

BUFFALO ERIE NIAGARA LAND IMPROVEMENT  
CORPORATION

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April 15, 2014

Dr. Kevin Hardwick  
Chair, Legislature Government Affairs Committee  
Old Erie County Hall - 92 Franklin Street, 4th Floor  
Buffalo, N.Y. 14202

Dr. Hardwick –

I wanted to take a moment to introduce myself as Executive Director of the Buffalo Erie Niagara Land Improvement Corporation (BENLIC) or the “Erie County Land Bank”.

I have a long history in the field of Urban Planning and worked in the field as a national consultant with a local planning and landscape architecture firm for almost 20 years. Seeking a change of focus toward Non-Profit Management, and an upgrade of my skills, I entered the One Year MBA Program at Canisius College and graduated in August of 2013. When the opportunity arose at the Land Bank I was thrilled.

First and foremost, I want to let you know how pleased I was to step into a situation that has been so carefully considered and organized even though I am BENLIC’s first paid staff member. Commissioner Maria Whyte, along with a team of professionals from throughout County Hall and volunteers from throughout Erie County, has done great work putting the policies in place to enable BENLIC to thrive.

As you are aware, the Land Bank has been very busy over the last year and funding from the NYS Office of the Attorney General has allowed us to dramatically scale up operations. I would welcome the opportunity to come before your Committee to formally introduce myself and provide an update to the Legislature on our work. Specifically, I’d like to provide an overview of our Internet Mapping System and our County-wide rehab program.

Thank you for your support of the Land Bank and your continued interest in our work. I really look forward to BENLIC’s continued partnership with yourself and your colleagues in helping us to address one of our region’s most pressing issues.

With kind regards,

Jocelyn Gordon

Cc Chairman John Mills, Majority Leader Joe Lorigo, Minority Leader Betty Jean Grant, Clerk Scott Kroll, Commissioner of Environment and Planning Maria Whyte