



The Greenbrier Companies, Inc.

One Centerpointe Drive Suite 200
Lake Oswego Oregon 97035
503 684 7000 Fax 503 684 7553

April 3, 2013

Oregon State Senate
Committee on Education and Workforce Development
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street, NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Senators:

The Greenbrier Companies is a leading designer, manufacturer, and marketer of railroad freight cars and marine barges, headquartered in Lake Oswego and employing over 800 Oregon workers at our Gunderson facility on the Portland waterfront. Greenbrier thanks you for the opportunity to offer its support of Senate Bill 828.

Manufacturing contributes 167,598 jobs to the Oregon economy at an average wage of \$60,223 per year, yet living wage job openings remain unfilled because applicants are not properly trained. Over the next three years, skilled production is expected to be at its highest demand to date, and thousands of skilled workers will be needed, due to projected retirement of baby boomers and new industry growth. In a recent survey conducted by the region's local Workforce Investment Boards, 126 manufacturing companies identified two key challenges: (1) hiring and retaining skilled production workers, and (2) motivating new workers to enter the industry.

SB 828 would provide funding to the Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development in order to create a fast-track training program in welding and similar skills at Portland Community College. The program, an 8-10 week "manufacturing boot camp" developed and implemented in conjunction with Regional Workforce Boards and industry leaders, will provide foundational job readiness, academic skills, technical skills training, and paid internships.

When they complete the program, participants will earn industry-recognized certifications, and job placement assistance will match program participants with manufacturing employment opportunities. Participants will be prepared to fill the gaps in the manufacturing sector and will be eligible for the higher wages commensurate with the skills they acquire.

This strategy aligns with the regional workforce plan, complements the Governor's workforce and educational objectives, and represents the leveraging of substantial private, state and federal investments.

In conclusion, Greenbrier believes that Senate Bill 828 is a necessary step to provide the Oregon economy with skilled employees. The bill benefits not only local industry, but also Oregon workers who will see their wages increase as they acquire technical training. Greenbrier respectfully requests that you pass SB 828.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jack Isselmann".

Jack Isselmann
Director, Corporate Relations & Communications