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February 18, 2013

Honorable Senator Chris Edwards  
Honorable Representative Ben Unger  
Members of the Ways & Means Natural Resources Subcommittee

Dear Co-Chairs and Subcommittee Members,

I am writing today with a twofold purpose, first to express our appreciation for the support received from the Oregon Department of Energy (ODOE) and second to request increased attention for non SB1149 Districts.

Over the past several years, ODOE has worked to support energy conservation measures implemented at La Grande School District. In 2007, they played a key role in the selection on an ESCO with which LGSD completed just under \$1 million in energy savings upgrades in 2008, all of which were funded through a commercial loan. More recently, ODOE assisted us with obtaining grant funding for additional building envelope analytical work (which complimented the Cool Schools audits) in support of roofing projects funded by a \$1.2 million QZAB approved by our Board in June 2012. When we have to make decisions involving energy consumption or conservation, ODOE is the first place we turn to for unbiased information.

Being located in rural North Eastern Oregon with our energy provided by Oregon Trail Electrical Cooperative (OTECC) and Avista (our natural gas utility) puts our District 100% outside the benefits of SB1149 and makes the energy upgrades process very difficult and expensive. We were initially very excited about the Governor's Cool School Program, but that excitement turned to disappointment as we learned that available funding was primarily limited to additional loans. Even though we spent close to \$1 million dollars in 2008 for energy upgrades, total incentives provided to offset these costs were less than \$30,000. Even though we receive lots of verbal support and encouragement from outside entities such as ODOE, the actual *financial* help we really need never seems to materialize.

Sincerely,

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**OPPORTUNITY & EXCELLENCE**

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