

Representative Jules Bailey
Oregon House of Representatives
900 Court St NE, H-274
Salem, Oregon 97301

Subject: Senate Bill 1578A

February 19, 2014

Dear Representative Bailey,

Quicksilver Contracting Co. strongly supports Senate Bill 1578 A-Engrossed, to make woody biomass an eligible green technology to meet the State's 1.5% investment requirement for new public buildings and major renovations. Utilizing woody biomass is part of our logging operations and we have been processing these materials for nearly 14 years. Our utilization work occurs mostly on Public lands but also includes Private landowners and Industrial clients as well. The hogfuel we produce is used in boilers to make steam for powering electrical generators.

As you may know, hogfuel is a low value commodity and it has a difficult time at paying its way "out of the woods" and to our markets. An increase in the demand for our product would help strengthen our business and provide us with a greater market for the hogfuel. There are times when we are unable to deliver hogfuel, mainly due to a lack of demand, periodic plant maintenance, or poor economics for a particular harvest area due to distance to market. If demand could be improved by using biomass for boilers in public buildings, we would be more likely to keep our crew working year round and could look at adding additional capital to enlarge our operation.

This source of energy is important since it helps to improve the health and well-being of Oregon's forests. Using biomass for energy also supports Oregon's state investments in forest health. By strengthening and building new markets to utilize woody biomass, existing jobs in the woods could be maintained and new ones may be forthcoming. Utilization also brings many additional benefits. It cleans up slash and debris which helps to decrease the spread of wildfire, it reduces the need to burn these materials which keeps the emissions out of our atmosphere, it reduces the cost of clean up after timber harvesting as there is minimal debris to dispose of. It is a benefit for all Oregonians and our neighbors.

The 1.5% requirement increases Oregon's energy independence and provides numerous economic and environmental benefits. However, exclusion of biomass as an eligible technology limits the mandate's efficiency and effectiveness to provide maximum local benefit and utilize Oregon's diverse renewable resources. We support a level playing field for renewable energy technologies, to ensure that the appropriate technology is tiered to the local resource. For certain areas of the state, the best renewable energy choice may be biomass, and Senate Bill 1578A, which the Oregon Department of Forestry supported in Senate committee testimony, will make sure this option is on the table.

We request that you please support Senate Bill 1578A to create new green energy jobs in Oregon's forest communities, keep energy dollars local, support forest stewardship, increase our energy independence, and reduce carbon emissions.

Sincerely,

John Williams
President