

Oregon House Committee on Energy and Environment
Attn. Representative Vega Pederson, Committee Chair

March 12, 2015

Subject: Support for HB 2833

Dear Chair Vega Pederson and Members of the Committee,

I am writing on behalf of Bear Mountain Forest Products to express support for HB 2833, amending ORS 279C.527 to make biomass an eligible green energy technology to meet the state's 1.5% investment requirement for new public buildings and major renovations.

Bear Mountain Forest Products is a forest products company specializing in wood fuel pellets, wood fire bricks/logs, animal bedding and BBQ pellets. We provide densified wood pellets for residential, commercial, and industrial sites across Oregon and abroad that are used for thermal heating. Wood pellets are a very uniform, clean burning, and convenient fuel that supports Oregon's forest sector and the communities that depend on it.

We support a diversity of renewable energies that matches the diversity of Oregon's resources. Solar energy is the best option for some communities, while geothermal, wind, or biomass is more appropriate for others. HB 2833 aligns the State with a more equitable stance on renewable energies, and empowers communities to choose the renewable energy that is best suited to their unique conditions. Oregon's rural communities are particularly poised to take advantage of the HB 2833 amendment, with many opportunities to replace expensive and imported fossil fuel with locally sourced biomass material.

The types of biomass energy that will be encouraged by HB 2833 represent the cleanest, most efficient, and socially acceptable systems in the spectrum of biomass energy. Small biomass thermal boilers and combined heat and power plants that are scaled to match the facility's energy needs make sense where alternative options include propane and heating oil. Replacing such expensive and imported fossil fuels with locally available biomass keeps money circulating in the local community, while also contributing to restoration activities on public and private lands.

While biomass energy makes sense for many communities, investing in this clean, renewable energy requires models and leadership. Public buildings are the perfect venue to serve in this role, demonstrating innovative renewable energy technologies that others can replicate. HB 2833 is critical to create a baseline that recognizes the suite of renewable energy available, including biomass, so that communities can make informed decisions about the technology that is right for them.

Please support HB 2833 to help create new jobs in forested communities, keep energy dollars circulating locally, support forest stewardship, increase our energy independence, and reduce our CO₂ emissions. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Levi Strayer
Bear Mountain Forest Products