

Testimony RE: SB482 – Pacific Northwest Manufacturing Partnership
David Kenney, President & Executive Director, Oregon BEST
House Committee on Transportation & Economic Development
Chair McKeown, Vice-Chairs Davis and Gorsek
Members of the Committee: Bentz, Hack, Lively, McLain

My name is David Kenney. I am the President & Executive Director of Oregon BEST, an initiative of the Oregon Innovation Council. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding Senate Bill 482 authorizing a Pacific Northwest Manufacturing Partnership Advisory Committee.

Oregon BEST is a nonprofit focused on accelerating research and commercialization of clean technologies in the state. Many of the companies we have been supporting have moved from technology and product development into scale up and manufacturing, so the issue of developing and supporting advanced manufacturing capabilities in Oregon is very relevant to us.

We've been involved in the PNMP since inception and I'll provide you with an example of how the Partnership is already delivering results. Due to the work we've done in creating a diverse group of stakeholders, when a U.S. Economic Development Administration, Economic Adjustment Assistance solicitation was released this past September, we were able to quickly create consensus, define the team and respond by proposing to advance the development of Cross Laminated Timber or CLT in Oregon. We believe CLT has the potential to revitalize our wood products industry.

The \$200,000 project titled, "Advanced Wood Products Manufacturing Study – Cross Laminated Timber Acceleration in Oregon and Southwest Washington," will study a variety of aspects essential for the region to play a significant role in the adoption of CLT in the building industry. It will provide insights on the raw material resource, the manufacturing capacity, the capital expense to start up a manufacturing line, the workforce training needs, and the market opportunity, as well as the market barriers. The PNMP provided assistance with grant writing and securing matching funds from Oregon BEST, Business Oregon, OSU, Woodworks, City of Eugene, Clackamas County, City of Corvallis, Benton County, and the Oregon Department of Forestry.

The work of the grant will be performed by Oregon BEST, the Oregon Manufacturing Extension Partnership, Impact Washington, Oregon State University's College of Business and its Department of Wood Science and Engineering, Clackamas County, Benton County, the Washington State University Center for Innovation and Value Creation, Business Oregon, as well as Woodworks and local workforce groups.

Having the PNMP already organized allowed us to quickly assemble a strong team that created a strong, competitive proposal to this EDA grant which will benefit not only the PNMP region but many parts of the region impacted by the prolonged downturn of the wood products and timber industries in the State of Oregon and Southwest Washington.

The PNMP will continue to develop and respond to our region's manufacturing community and having this Advisory Committee will help provide broad perspectives, thoughtful guidance, and assistance in setting Partnership priorities. In addition, official recognition by the State of Oregon via the proposed Advisory Committee will demonstrate an additional level of commitment from our state government, a higher level of visibility within our state, and more credibility when seeking both federal funding and support from industry, association, and local government partners.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify today. I'm happy to answer any questions.