



April 15, 2015

Senator Arnie Roblan
Senator Tim Knopp
Senate Committee on Education
Oregon State Capitol

Dear Chair Roblan, Vice-Chair Knopp, and Members of the Committee:

Sustainable Northwest would like to express our support for passage and full funding of Senate Bill 950 to launch the Oregon State University and University of Oregon National Center for Advanced Wood Products Manufacturing and Design. This investment will maintain Oregon's reputation as a leader in wood products research and engineering, and position our state as a national innovator in the field of wood products manufacturing and architectural design.

Our experience with the need for this Center has most recently been highlighted by efforts to test the design and engineering values of Western Juniper for use in structural applications. The need to conduct these tests was identified nearly 20 years ago, but was only recently funded due to a series of fortunate circumstances and generous support from USDA Rural Development and the State of Oregon. The services provided by the National Center would make sure efforts to research and commercialize wood products innovations are no longer delayed and funded in an inconsistent manner that inhibits market potential and development.

The Center would also focus on new technologies such as composite wood panels and cross laminated timber that represent the future of the wood products industry, incentives for sustainable forest stewardship, and jobs for rural forest communities. This university partnership will lead to commercialization and adoption of these innovative applications, train the workforce of tomorrow for the timber industry, and introduce environmentally friendly Oregon grown wood products into buildings across the state, country, and world.

We urge the legislature to pass and fully fund SB 950 to maintain Oregon's strategic advantage in forest products development, and step forward as a national leader in the future of green building engineering and design. Thank you for your consideration of this important effort.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dylan Kruse".

Dylan Kruse
Policy Director
Sustainable Northwest
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