



Testimony in Favor of SB 950

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Through the miracle process of photosynthesis, forests use the power of the sun to combine carbon dioxide and water into complex hydrocarbon chains that compose trees while releasing oxygen back into the air. Think about that for a minute; forests, utilizing nothing but solar power, combine carbon dioxide – CO₂, a greenhouse gas – and water (H₂O) into complex hydrogen and carbon sugar chains of which trees are made, then releases the oxygen back into the atmosphere. And nature does it all for free.

Wood is organic, sustainable, natural, strong, lightweight, flexible, and renewable; the greenest of building materials. Oregon has the best tree-growing land in the world for growing our native species, Douglas-fir – which happens to be the world's premier softwood lumber species.

This is an exciting time for Oregon's forest products industry. Oregon is already the number one softwood lumber and plywood producing state in the United States and is home to one of the world's most sustainable and globally competitive forest products sectors. But, we can do more, much more. We need to continue to build on that reputation by advancing research in forestry and new wood products technologies and design while promoting more extensive use of sustainable, green Oregon forest products in domestic and global markets.

The Oregon State University College of Forestry is internationally recognized as one of the premier forestry schools in the world. The Oregon State University Department of Engineering and the University of Oregon's School of Architecture and Allied Arts are national leaders in the green building field.

By providing \$3.4 million in lottery funding, SB 950 would help fund the development –with 1:1 matching dollars – of The National Center for Advanced Wood Products Manufacturing and Design. This one-of-a-kind collaboration between these universities and other public and private sector participants will create synergies that result in a powerful partnership cementing Oregon's position as a national leader in the development of green building materials and sustainable building design.

The market opportunities are enormous. It is estimated that, world-wide, some 3 billion people will require new housing in the next 20 years, and a large share of that need will be from Asia. With the development of this center, Oregon is ideally situated to take advantage of this market development and provide green sustainable building products Asian markets on an unprecedented scale.

Domestically, expanding markets and use of Oregon wood creates jobs, sustains rural economic vitality, increases energy independence, and encourages retention of private forestlands in forest use, all while reducing carbon in the atmosphere and providing clean water, wildlife habitat, recreation opportunities and the multitude of other social and ecosystem services that flow from Oregon's forests.

This is an historic opportunity, and OFIC strongly urges the passage of SB 905.