

July 9th 2020

Senator Betsy Johnson, Co-Chair
Senator Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, Co-Chair
Representative Dan Rayfield, Co-Chair
Joint Committee on Ways and Means
H-178, State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Co-Chairs Betsy Johnson, Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, and Dan Rayfield,

We are writing to express our support for maintaining the current level of funding to the TallWood Design Institute. This funding has been critical to the important work the Institute has been doing to support and grow Oregon's mass timber design and manufacturing industries.

Launched in 2015, the Institute brings together a unique collaboration between leading architecture, wood science, and engineering programs at both Oregon State University and University of Oregon to focus on development of innovative wood products and building components produced in Oregon. We can attest to the fact that the Institute actively partners with Oregon building design professionals, contractors, and wood products manufacturers to drive innovation and provide testing for engineered wood materials, and is addressing workforce skills gaps in manufacturing, design and engineering, all of which is vital for Oregon's competitiveness in rapidly-growing domestic and global markets for mass timber products and buildings.

As architects, engineers, construction firms, wood products businesses, and civic and nonprofit organizations we share a collective interest in working to ensure that Oregon maintains its leadership in innovative and sustainable building design and the manufacture of engineered wood products. Since 2015, the TallWood Design Institute has leveraged state funding to bring an additional \$8M in federal and private research funds to the state. The Institute has initiated more than 50 research and testing projects that are creating new market opportunities and eliminating barriers to the manufacture and application of wood products in Oregon and in the rest of the United States. Critically at this point in time, the Institute's work is supporting an increasing number of high-value manufacturing jobs in our rural communities, new project opportunities for our design professionals, and the sustainable management of healthy forests through the use of small diameter trees and low-value wood species.

Thanks to the state support of TDI and a \$12M investment by the OSU College of Forestry, the brand-new Emerson Advanced Wood Products Lab opened in 2019 to provide world-class R&D facilities for our timber sector. Combined with an \$8M commitment by the University of Oregon for a timber acoustic testing facility, this will give the Institute unparalleled capabilities to further advance the timber sector, a critical strategic opportunity for our state. Please support the funding the Legislature allocated for TDI in its 2019-21 budget.

Sincerely,