

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

April 3, 2015

The Honorable Penny S. Pritzker  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
Herbert Clark Hoover Building  
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Pritzker:

We are writing in strong support of Business Oregon's application to the Economic Development Administration's Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership (IMCP) program. While the lead applicant, Business Oregon, is the official business development agency for the state of Oregon, the application brings together a broad coalition of communities and economic development interests from both Oregon and SW Washington, known as the Pacific Northwest Manufacturing Partnership (PNMP).

PNMP is a unique consortium of regional economic development districts that run along both the Columbia and Willamette Rivers extending from the Eugene-Springfield metropolitan region, north to the Portland-Vancouver region, and east to Hood River in the Columbia River Gorge. This partnership is dedicated to workforce development, linking urban and rural economies, and strengthening opportunities for manufacturing job creation.

Oregon and SW Washington are already national leaders in manufacturing and innovation. According to a 2013 ECONorthwest report, Oregon leads the nation in manufacturing output per capita. Moreover, in December 2013, Bloomberg Businessweek listed Oregon as the fifth most innovative state in the country. Our region supports a diverse array of manufacturing sectors from timber to specialty metals to semiconductors.

To ensure that our region's productivity creates even greater economic and social benefits, PNMP continues to invest in a variety of research and collaborative programs in its greatest emerging sector, advanced materials manufacturing with a specific emphasis on Cross Laminated Timber (CLT).

We understand that education and workforce training is essential to the economic competitiveness of region's innovative manufacturing industries. That is why our region continues to invest in the instruction of students and workers for science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) occupations. We are also tackling skill development challenges in the key manufacturing competencies of the future with targeted investments in career and technical education (CTE) and apprenticeships.

As you will see when you review the application, the partners – from the South Willamette Valley in Oregon to Clark County, Washington – are already collaborating within and across a wide variety of manufacturing sectors and industries. We believe that recognizing and promoting these efforts under the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership program would benefit the region and indeed, the entire country.

We urge your full and fair consideration of the application from the Pacific Northwest Manufacturing Partnership.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey A. Merkley  
United States Senator



Ron Wyden  
United States Senator



Earl Blumenauer  
United States Representative



Suzanne Bonamici  
United States Representative



Peter DeFazio  
United States Representative



Kurt Schrader  
United States Representative



Greg Walden  
United States Representative