

## **Testimony in Support of Senator Nash's Lumber Grading Training Program Bill**

*Submitted by: Wallowa Students and Educators in Agriculture and Natural Resources*

Dear Members of the Legislative Assembly,

As an educator of Wallowa's Agriculture and Natural Resources program, I wholeheartedly support Senator Nash's bill to establish a lumber grading training program and certification process. This initiative is not just an opportunity for students and teachers like us — it's a crucial step in empowering rural communities, preserving local resources, and equipping the next generation with hands-on, marketable skills.

Our school's agriculture and construction programs have grown exponentially over the past few years. What started as a small dream in a parking lot saw mill has transformed into a thriving learning space, complete with a new CTE Natural Resources building, a greenhouse for our aquaponics systems, and, most importantly, a sawmill funded by the CTE Revitalization Grant. Recently, representatives from wood companies like the Oregon Small Woodlands Association came to watch a live demonstration of our sawmill in action, showing the excitement and industry support for what we are building — literally and figuratively.

Students are not just learning theory; we are actively contributing to our community. We've been cutting timber, building sheds, installing siding, and learning every stage of the construction process. Our attendance has increased by 40% in the past two years as hands-on learning has revitalized student engagement. Our program has been recognized not only at the state level but also nationally for the work we're doing with our sawmill, highlighting the impact and potential of student-led production in rural areas.

However, without the ability to certify our lumber, we can't complete the full cycle of production. This bill would allow students who put in the work — from falling timber to crafting usable materials — to get their lumber graded and legally sold for construction. It would bridge the gap between education and industry, giving students a tangible path to employment and local businesses access to certified, locally sourced materials.

By passing this bill, you would be investing in the future of Oregon's timber industry, supporting rural education, and fostering self-sufficiency in communities like ours. We are ready and eager to step into this responsibility, and we respectfully urge you to support this measure for the benefit of students, local economies, and the sustainability of Oregon's natural resources.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Brianna Micka- Agriculture Educator

Wallowa Agriculture and Natural Resources

## **Student Testimonies**

As a student at the Wallowa high school who attends both agriculture, FFA and natural resource classes, I think that this bill would affect us greatly. With me being in a natural resource class that sells lumber it would have a great effect on my class and other people in this path of living. This is why I think we should pass this bill.

Sincerely,

Kyler Lowe

Freshman at Wallowa, President of the Wallowa FFA Chapter, Henderson Logging family operator, and owner of KJ Lumber

The sawmill has been a great tool for us and has helped us gain practical knowledge. We are learning the skills we truly will be using in the real world. Most of us students at Wallowa want to come back to our community and establish our roots here. This is a great opportunity for us to understand the whole process of the cycle. We always say to support the locals. Isn't this the best way to do so? We as the future employers of our state can be learning the skills necessary and learning the standard necessary to make money.

I think passing this bill will help our community and others to access materials for cheaper and it will help our school and programs that I am involved in like FFA and natural resources. This bill will make it possible for us to sell lumber and start building our financial standing to grow our program.

Sincerely,

Elijah Brainard  
Student of Wallowa