118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. ______

To require the Secretary of Agriculture to carry out certain activities relating to research for wood products, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. WYDEN introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on ____________________

A BILL

To require the Secretary of Agriculture to carry out certain activities relating to research for wood products, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-
tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Timber Innovation for Building Rural Communities Act”.

SEC. 2. DEFINITION OF SECRETARY.

In this Act, the term “Secretary” means the Sec-
retary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the For-
est Service.
SEC. 3. FOREST AND WOOD PRODUCTS DATA PROVISION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in collaboration with the Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service and in consultation with federally recognized Indian Tribes, State Foresters, and private sector partners, shall establish a platform to provide measurement, monitoring, verification, and reporting data regarding the carbon emissions, sequestration, storage, and related atmospheric impacts of forest management and wood products.

(b) ACTIVITIES.—In carrying out subsection (a), the Secretary shall source data, information, and analyses from Department of Agriculture programs, including—

(1) the Forest Inventory and Analysis program;

(2) the Timber Products Output survey;

(3) Forest Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service soil carbon estimations;

(4) Department of Agriculture entity-level guidance;

(5) the Forest Products Laboratory;

(6) the Federal Life Cycle Assessment Commons;

(7) Department of Agriculture entity-level guidelines; and

(8) other relevant programmatic data and information sources that are published and made available.
(c) PRIORITIES.—The platform established by subsection (a) shall provide tools that calculate—

(1) the above- and below-ground forest carbon stocks and stock changes associated with species composition, forest management regime, and landowner types, including small area estimations for regional and localized geographies across the United States, which shall be made available through the Forest Inventory and Analysis program updates and annual reports;

(2) the embodied carbon involved in the manufacturing of products, using data from published environmental product declarations and life cycle assessments, which shall be updated as new and more refined data becomes available;

(3) the long-term stored carbon in manufactured timber products; and

(4) the carbon displacement of wood products, compared to other materials, using substitution factors.

(d) TIMEFRAME.—To the maximum extent practicable, the Secretary shall establish the platform under subsection (a) not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act.
(c) Authorization of Appropriations.—There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as are necessary to carry out this section.

SEC. 4. WOOD INNOVATION GRANT PROGRAM.

Section 8643 of the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (7 U.S.C. 7655d) is amended—

(1) in subsection (d), by inserting “‘50 percent of” before “the amount”; and

(2) by striking subsection (c) and inserting the following:

“(c) Targeting Support for Economic Development, Enhanced Building Design, and Impact Assessment.—In selecting among proposals of eligible entities under subsection (b)(2), the Secretary may give priority to proposals for projects that—

“(1) include the use or retrofitting (or both) of existing sawmill facilities located in counties in which the average annual unemployment rate exceeded the national average unemployment rate by more than 1 percent in the previous calendar year;

“(2) recognize or enhance carbon reduction strategies in building design, including forest impacts, which can be improved or incentivized by North American procurement; or
“(3) report on the connection between the proposal and the resilience and economic benefits associated with wood products from anticipated wood supply areas, including wildfire risk reduction, increased fiber flow, forest or mill jobs, and support for forested communities created because of forest management.”.

SEC. 5. WOOD BUILDING EDUCATION ACCELERATOR GRANT PROGRAM.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term “eligible entity” means—

(A) an engineering, architecture, or design school at an institution of higher education; or

(B) a center of excellence that consists of 1 or more partnerships between forestry, engineering, architecture, or business schools at 1 or more institutions of higher education.

(2) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary, acting through the Research and Development deputy area and the State, Private, and Tribal Forestry deputy area of the Forest Service.

(b) GRANT PROGRAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish a program, to be known as the “Wood Building
Education Accelerator Grant Program”, to annually award grants to geographically diverse eligible entities to support the development of curricula, programs, and best practices relating to the critical elements of designing and building with wood, including the use of traditional wood products, mass timber, and other advanced wood products.

(2) PROPOSALS.—To be eligible to receive a grant under this subsection, an eligible entity shall submit to the Secretary a proposal at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require.

(3) REVIEW AND AWARDS.—The Secretary shall review proposals submitted under paragraph (2), and award grants under this subsection, in consultation with nonprofit organizations, research organizations, or other private entities providing funding to eligible entities to support activities carried out using grants under this section.

(e) MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—As a condition of receiving a grant under subsection (b)(1), an eligible entity shall provide funds equal to the amount received by the eligible entity under the grant, to be derived from non-Federal sources.
(d) Limitation on Amount.—The total amount of grants awarded under subsection (b)(1) shall be not more than $10,000,000 for each fiscal year.

(e) Authorization of Appropriations.—There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as are necessary to carry out this section.

SEC. 6. RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND BUILDING PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) Definitions.—In this section:

(1) Eligible Entity.—The term “eligible entity” means—

(A) a nonprofit organization;

(B) a community-based organization;

(C) a State, local, or municipal government;

(D) a tribally designated housing authority;

(E) a private entity, as determined by the Secretary; and

(F) a consortium of 2 or more entities described in subparagraphs (A) through (E).

(2) Produced and Assembled in the United States.—The term “produced and assembled in the United States”, with regard to wood materials, means that—
(A) the wood materials, if manufactured, were manufactured entirely in the United States; and

(B) if the wood materials were produced, all production occurred entirely in the United States.

(3) PUBLIC AGENCY.—The term “public agency” means a department, agency, other unit, or instrumentality of Federal, State, Tribal, or local government.

(4) RURAL.—The term “rural” has the meaning given the term in section 343(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1991(a)).

(5) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Under Secretary for Rural Development, in consultation with the Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment.

(b) GRANT PROGRAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall award grants to eligible entities to carry out pilot projects to demonstrate the use of innovative wood products, systems, and technologies, such as mass timber, in
the construction and renovation of rural infrastructure and building projects.

(2) APPLICATIONS.—To be eligible to receive a grant under this subsection, an eligible entity shall submit to the Secretary an application at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require.

(c) PROJECT REQUIREMENTS.—A pilot project carried out using a grant received under subsection (b)(1) shall—

(1) be not longer than 5 years;

(2) include collaboration between 1 or more eligible entities and 1 or more public agencies;

(3) primarily use for construction materials wood products that are manufactured and prefabricated offsite and assembled onsite as a “kit-of-parts” or by assembling finished modules;

(4) to the extent practicable, use wood materials that are produced and assembled in the United States; and

(5) be located in or provide benefits to a rural community that, to the extent practicable, has a history in wood products manufacturing.

(d) MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—As a condition of receiving a grant under subsection (b)(1), an eligible entity
shall provide funds, to be derived from non-Federal sources—

(1) except as provided in paragraph (2), equal to the amount received by the eligible entity under the grant; or

(2) in the case of a pilot project serving a population of—

(A) less than 19,000 residents, equal to 50 percent of the amount received by the eligible entity under the grant; or

(B) less than 2,500 residents, equal to 25 percent of the amount received by the eligible entity under the grant.

(e) LIMITATION ON AMOUNT.—The total amount of grants awarded under subsection (b)(1) shall be not more than $10,000,000 for each fiscal year.

(f) EVALUATION.—The Secretary shall provide for an independent evaluation of pilot projects carried out under this section that includes—

(1) a summary of the activities conducted under the pilot projects;

(2) an assessment of the effectiveness of the project requirements described in subsection (e); and
(3) best practices regarding the use of public-private partnerships for increased wood utilization to benefit rural communities.

(g) Authorization of Appropriations.—There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as are necessary to carry out this section.