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February 17, 2015

To: Brandon Trelstad, OSU Sustainability Coordinator

Dear Mr. Trelstad,

I am writing to support the submission from Drs. Travis Walker and Skip Rochefort to AASHE's Sustainability Tracking, Assessment, and Rating System (STARS). I have had the pleasure of working with Dr. Rochefort on bioplastics research at OSU since 2014.

Made from non-renewable petroleum, polystyrene-based material (e.g. Styrofoam blocks used in packaging) degrades very slowly in landfills, and poses significant adverse effects to the environment. Recycling waste polystyrene for the manufacturing of value-added products will remediate the hazardous effects of the waste and create job opportunities in the renewable industry.

Compression of recycled Styrofoam blocks into building insulation is a technology with great potential, particularly in regions that are far away from recycling centers. In remote areas and Third World countries where the transportation of waste Styrofoam to large-scale Styrofoam remolding facilities is cost prohibitive, compression of of recycled Styrofoam could provide the communities with easy access to inexpensive building insulation that has decent thermal properties.

I appreciate the work of Dr. Walker and Dr. Rochefort in pioneering sustainable engineering research at OSU and engaging undergraduate students in the project. I feel very excited about how their research promotes the construction of a sustainable campus at OSU.

Sincerely,

Zhenglun "Glen" Li, PhD
Instructor, BioEnergy Education Program
Oregon State University