



PUBLIC AFFAIRS ASSOCIATES

PUBLIC AND GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

February 24, 2015

Dear STARs Committee,

I am writing to support the STARs innovation credit submitted by the George Washington University.

In my consulting business, I support the emerging biobased industry. This is an important industry that can help replace petroleum-derived products with renewable materials and thereby contribute to the sustainability of the planet. Biobased products are derived from plants and other renewable materials. They can be found in many manufactured products such as cleaning products, bioplastics, and lubricants to name a few. Many of these products also reduce the use of harsh chemicals and lower VOCs. Executive Order 13514, *Federal Leadership in Environmental, Energy, and Economic Performance*, and a 2012 Presidential Memo, *Driving Innovation and Creating Jobs in Rural America through Biobased and Sustainable Product Procurement*, require the Federal Government to purchase biobased products. Information on the federal procurement requirement can be found at:

Since the mandate for federal agencies to buy biobased products is relatively new, many federal acquisition officials are unaware of it as well as the wide range of biobased products from which they have to choose. For this reason, the United Soybean Board collaborated with the GW Sustainability Collaborative to host a Biobased Stakeholders' Dialogue, June 17-18, 2014. The Dialogue included, among other things, a product showcase, opportunities for federal and university acquisition officers to meet with manufacturers to discuss product needs, a wide range of panel discussions, video interviews by GW's Planet Forward for sharing on social media, and a session on how the Millennial Generation views biobased and sustainability, chaired by the Executive Director of the GW Sustainability Collaborative and including undergraduate and graduate GW students. A Planet Forward "recap" of the event can be found at:

Following the Dialogue, GW faculty and students undertook a research project, at my request. The project goal was to identify best strategies for the biobased manufacturing sector to better inform and engage university campuses on opportunities for biobased acquisition as part of larger sustainability efforts.



The GW Sustainability Collaborative efforts to assist the industry have been a success and have helped our government move closer to achieving its biobased goals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Karen C. Edwards".

Karen C. Edwards

Principal

KCE Public Affairs Associates

Consultant to the United Soybean Board

Representative of the Biobased Products Coalition