

# Department of Commerce

Prepared by the North Dakota Legislative Council staff

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**Centers of excellence grants** - The 2009 Legislative Assembly appropriated \$15 million from the general fund for transfer to the centers of excellence fund for providing funding to centers of excellence for the 2009-11 biennium. The Legislative Assembly provided a contingent general fund appropriation of \$5 million for transfer to the centers of excellence fund for providing additional centers of excellence funding for the 2009-11 biennium. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) may transfer this funding only if actual general fund revenues for the period July 1, 2009, through December 1, 2009, exceed estimated general fund revenues for that period by at least \$5 million, as determined by OMB, based on the legislative estimates made at the close of the 2009 legislative session.

The 2009 Legislative Assembly provided in Section 23 of Senate Bill No. 2018 that the Department of Commerce use \$10 million of the funds transferred to the centers of excellence fund for centers of excellence enhancement grants. The centers of excellence enhancement grants may be made available to research universities under the control of the State Board of Higher Education or nonprofit university-related foundations for use in infrastructure or enhancement of economic development and employment opportunities.

The Office of Management and Budget transferred \$15 million from the general fund to the centers of excellence fund in February 2010. In addition, OMB determined actual general fund revenues for the period July 1, 2009, through December 1, 2009, exceeded estimated general fund revenues for that period by at least \$5 million and transferred the contingent general fund appropriation of \$5 million in December 2009.

Through June 2010 the Centers of Excellence Commission has awarded \$7.75 million of the \$10 million appropriated for centers of excellence enhancement grants to the following projects:

University of North Dakota	Center of Excellence for Unmanned Aircraft Systems research, education, and training	\$2,754,000
North Dakota State University	Research I expansion	4,000,000
	Materials and Nanotechnology Center	1,000,000
Total		\$7,754,000

Through June 2010 the Centers of Excellence Commission, as approved by the Emergency Commission and Budget Section, has awarded \$6.7 million of the \$10 million appropriated for centers of excellence to the following projects:

North Dakota State University	Center for Sensors, Communications and Control	\$2,800,000
North Dakota State University	Center for Advanced Technology Development and Commercialization	3,900,000
Total		\$6,700,000

The Budget Section did not approve a \$500,000 centers of excellence proposal for a geriatric research center at Minot State University.