



Doosan Bobcat  
250 East Beaton Dr.  
West Fargo, ND 58078

March 6, 2023

Senate Appropriations – Education and Environment Division  
Chairman Sorvaag

**Re: New Engineering Facility at North Dakota State University**

To whom it may concern:

Headquartered in West Fargo, North Dakota, Doosan Bobcat North America is the state's largest manufacturer and a major employer with more than 3,500 people employed at our facilities in Bismarck, Gwinner, Fargo, West Fargo and Wahpeton. We continue to grow our business – but this growth cannot continue without the next generation of engineers.

Like other manufacturers and employers in the state, recruiting, growing and retaining a quality, skilled workforce is an ongoing challenge. According to North Dakota State University (NDSU), 5,800 job openings in North Dakota last year required engineering degrees – but only 512 engineering and computer science students graduated from North Dakota's universities.

Too many engineering jobs are unfilled, and it does not have to be this way. Of the pool of North Dakota natives who graduate from NDSU, 80 percent stay for their first job – meaning there is an appetite among young professionals to build their lives here and impact the state economy.

Doosan Bobcat has hired hundreds of college students through our competitive intern and co-op program for more than 25 years. Each student receives practical work experience in various disciplines, including electrical, mechanical, industrial, manufacturing and software engineering. Today, we employ more than 850 engineers and innovation team members in North America.

As a company built on decades of engineering advancements, Doosan Bobcat is committed to investing in and developing the talent pool that will shape the next century of innovation.

And innovation only occurs in spaces equipped with the necessary workspace and technology. NDSU engineering programs are decentralized, and facilities are overcrowded. This isn't subjective: More than a decade ago, accreditors pointed out that these issues could limit the quality and capacity of NDSU's engineering programs. Little has changed since then.

In order for Bobcat and other regional companies to remain competitive, we need the best and brightest engineers working across our sites. To that end, facilities and learning environments are important to that cause. If North Dakota is to remain the leader in technology development in our region, we need to proactively educate our students at the latest facilities. Today NDSU appears to be falling behind in this area.

As the North Dakota Legislature seeks to ensure that our state stays competitive and attracts top talent, we respectfully encourage you to prioritize funding for NDSU's Center for Engineering Entrepreneurship and Innovation. As technologies move toward AI, cyber security, software



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development, autonomy, and electrification, we will need facilities that can support educating the future generations of North Dakota engineers, and therefore endorse the State of North Dakota's support for updated engineering facilities at NDSU.

Students may end up working for Doosan Bobcat, but even if they stay and put their talents to work at other companies in the state or region, it's a benefit to our communities in North Dakota.

To ensure all businesses have the workforce we need to grow and thrive, it is important to invest in the next generation of engineers and innovators who are needed to support high-growth industries that promise to invigorate businesses and communities statewide.

That's why in 2015 we donated \$3 million to NDSU to fund a STEM-related scholarship program. Our gift was matched at 50% by the North Dakota Higher Education Challenge Grant Fund for a combined gift of \$4.5 million. As of fall 2021, the endowment will distribute approximately \$180,000 in scholarships every year in perpetuity, benefiting countless students and their families.

At Doosan Bobcat, we appreciated the funding appropriated to the Challenge Grant Fund to support the next generation, and we encourage you to build upon these efforts during this session.

Thank you for your consideration and your service on behalf of our state.

Sincerely,

**Joel Honeyman**

Vice President of Global Innovation

Doosan Bobcat North America