

HB1020

Government Operations Division of the Senate Appropriations Committee

3/9/23

Sarah Hall Lovas, SBARE Chair

Chairman Wanzek and members of the Government Operations Division of the Senate Appropriations Committee. My name is Sarah Hall Lovas and I am an agronomist from Hillsboro, ND. I currently serve as the Chair of State Board of Agricultural Research and Education (SBARE). Thank you for this opportunity to come before you today and share with you some information about the North Dakota Agricultural Research Station (NDAES), NDSU Extension (Extension), and SBARE. Thank you for your previous support for the NDAES and Extension.

Last week, I shared with the entire Senate Appropriations Committee information relating to the history, duties, and prioritization process the SBARE conducts when developing the SBARE Priorities. Dr. Greg Lardy will go through our priorities with you in more detail. However, there is one point of clarification I would like to make about a question from last week. HB 1020 does contain funds to purchase land for the Hettinger Research Extension Center. This land purchase request did not go through the traditional prioritization process, because this is not our custom with land purchase requests. These are unique requests and historically, SBARE has handled these separately from all other capital and programmatic ideas. In February, 2022 the board heard from Dr. Schauer, HREC Director, who discussed the need for this land and its' impact on the research programs at the HREC. The board asked him to gather additional information and ultimately, at the board's July 29, 2022 meeting a motion was made and passed supporting the HREC land purchase.

I know I stated this last week, but Agriculture has a \$30.8 billion dollar contribution to North Dakota's economy. Further, agriculture research has an ROI of 25%. Investing in agriculture research is a good investment!

However, it isn't just about the money. It's about the people of North Dakota and how their lives are improved through the education programs provided by Extension. It is about North Agriculture and how it is advanced due to cutting edge research from the NDAES.

The NDAES provides research that private industries do not. For example, the NDAES has plant breeding programs for crops such as dry beans and pulse crops. These crops might not have enough acres nationally for a private company to justify a plant breeding program, but they are very important crops in North Dakota and the NDAES provides an opportunity for our producers to have access to plant genetics that helps keep their farming operations competitive. We have extreme weather in North Dakota and it is a challenging place to raise livestock. Our livestock producers depend on Extension and the NDAES to provide them with information in time of extreme weather like drought and extreme snowstorms. 4-H is one of the best programs to help prepare youth to be service-minded future leaders. 4-H teaches fortitude to see challenging projects all the way through; valuable leadership skills; and the value of giving back to your community. These are only a few examples of how Extension and the NDAES impact North Dakota every day. There are others today who will help explain how Extension and the NDAES impacts them.

Thank you again for you time this morning. I would stand for any questions that you may have.

Request: Please support the SBARE Priority list. Please support the Field Lab Facility request.

Please support enhancing state employee compensation packages.