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**Senate Appropriations Committee – Government Operations Division**

**Hearing for SB 2020**

**January 16, 2025**

**Testimony of Jim Bahm, North Dakota Ag Coalition**

Chairman Wanzek and members of the committee, my name is Jim Bahm. I am here today as the Chairman of the North Dakota Ag Coalition. The Ag Coalition has provided a unified voice for North Dakota agricultural interests for more than 40 years. Today, we represent 49 statewide organizations and associations that represent specific commodities or have a direct interest in agriculture. Our members seek to enhance North Dakota's agriculture industry through membership in the Ag Coalition.

The Ag Coalition considers policy action items, brought forward by our members, seriously. It takes a policy position on a limited number of issues every session and only on those that have a significant impact on North Dakota's agriculture industry. The Ag Coalition is a diverse group that addresses all facets of agriculture that depend on NDSU Research and Education. As such, the North Dakota Ag Coalition supports the State Board of Agricultural Research and Education (SBARE) 2025-2027 priorities, including its priorities for the North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station and NDSU Extension and its capital improvement/one-time requests.

Innovation and technology in agriculture are continually challenging North Dakota's commodity producers to make decisions that produce the highest quality, most economically feasible product. Ag research and extension are essential to ensuring our producers are equipped to mitigate struggles and problem solve issues facing rural North Dakota. The Ag Coalition has five appointees on SBARE; it is pleased to be a voice in support of these priorities to advance and enhance agriculture in North Dakota.

Thank you for your past support of agricultural initiatives. We urge your continued support of research and extension as these programs provide valuable information, education, and tools for the state's producers. These producers have been – and will continue to be – the driving force in the future of North Dakota's number one industry and the state's economy.

The North Dakota Ag Coalition encourages your support of SB 2020. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.