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**Testimony of  
Matt Perdue  
North Dakota Farmers Union  
Before the  
Senate Appropriations Committee – Government Operations Division  
January 16, 2025**

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Chairman Wanzek and members of the division,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill No. 2020. My name is Matt Perdue, and I am testifying on behalf of North Dakota Farmers Union's (NDFU) members.

I first want to thank this committee for your strong commitment to NDSU and the Agricultural Experiment Station (AES). The new Peltier Complex and the Bolley Agricultural Laboratory will bolster NDSU's ability to provide cutting edge research and improve farmers' and ranchers' access to markets. Our members deeply appreciate your support for these critical projects.

NDFU supports the complete list of SBARE priorities, which were developed with robust stakeholder input. I specifically want to highlight the requests for the Center for Agricultural Policy and Trade Studies, Biofuels and Carbon Management, and operating support.

**Center for Agricultural Policy and Trade Studies**

North Dakota agriculture plays a unique role in U.S. and global agricultural markets. We lead the country in production of 13 commodities. We are ranked in the top five in eight more commodities.<sup>1</sup> We are also land-locked and highly dependent on rail transportation and trans-Pacific trade. Because of this, we are uniquely impacted by domestic and international trade policy.

Investing in the CAPTS center will provide analysis that more accurately reflects the unique impacts domestic and trade policy on North Dakota farmers and ranchers. It will also help North Dakota agriculture navigate the growing complexities of the global trade environment. We strongly encourage this committee to invest in the three requested positions:

1. An Agricultural Policy Analyst to inform policymakers, agribusinesses, farmers, and ranchers about the impact of policy changes and market conditions;
2. A markets and Trade Analyst to enhance the competitiveness of North Dakota agriculture through comprehensive agricultural trade and policy analysis; and

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<sup>1</sup> Jantzi, D., Rangel, L., and Krupich, B. (2024, August). *North Dakota Agriculture*. USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Services. Ag Statistics No. 93. Retrieved from [https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics\\_by\\_State/North\\_Dakota/Publications/Annual\\_Statistical\\_Bulletin/2024/ND-Annual-Bulletin24.pdf](https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/North_Dakota/Publications/Annual_Statistical_Bulletin/2024/ND-Annual-Bulletin24.pdf).



3. An Economic Impact/Contribution Specialist to provide transparent analyses that facilitates systematic and thoughtful debates on public policy issues.

### **Biofuels and Carbon Management**

Pressures to reduce carbon emissions are impacting food, agriculture and fuel markets right now and will continue to do so. Those impacts are most pronounced in renewable fuels markets, where a combination of policy and market forces are transforming the economics of renewable fuels production. This shift could create new opportunities for producers.

However, it is clear producers need more objective, science-based information to guide their decision-making. In a 2024 study by Bushel, only 19% of farmers reported participating in a carbon program. The primary barriers for producers were “lack of information” and “too much uncertainty.”<sup>2</sup>

We encourage the committee to invest in Biofuels and Carbon Management priority and the Extension Biofuels and Carbon Initiative. Together, these two proposals will help provide the research and education farmers and ranchers need to take advantage of new opportunities and navigate new challenges.

### **Operational Support**

I want to thank this committee for your strong commitment to NDSU and the Agricultural Experiment Station (AES). The new Peltier Complex and the Bolley Agricultural Laboratory will bolster NDSU’s ability to provide cutting edge research and improve farmers’ and ranchers’ access to markets. Our members deeply appreciate your support for these critical projects.

We encourage the committee to invest in the operating support requested in SBARE’s priorities. The investments the legislature has made in facilities at NDSU and the AES create major opportunities for North Dakota agriculture. To capitalize on those opportunities, NDSU needs adequate operating resources.

### **Conclusion**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I will stand for any questions.

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<sup>2</sup> Bushel. (2024). *State of the Farm, 2024 Report*. Retrieved from <https://1557649.fs1.hubspotusercontent-na1.net/hubfs/1557649/Bushel%202024%20State%20of%20the%20Farm%20Report%20-%20Final.pdf>.