

January 13, 2025

Commissioner Doug Goehring
Office of the Agriculture Commissioner
600 E Boulevard Ave Dept. 602
Bismarck, ND 58505-0020

Honorable Commissioner Doug Goehring:

The Greater Fargo Moorhead Economic Development Corporation (GFMEDC) is writing to affirm our support for any upcoming funding considerations for the Bioscience Association of North Dakota (BioND).

As a regional economic development organization, the GFMEDC is laser focused on industries that hold great promise for the state's economic future, strengthen the composition of local industry clusters, and support continued economic diversification. The bioscience industry, with its vast applications, is one of the targeted sectors we believe holds significant potential for the region and state's future economic prosperity. Because of this, we value the close partnership with BioND to drive positive impacts in this high growth industry sector.

BioND has been an extremely consequential and impactful force in growing the North Dakota bioscience industry since its formation in 2010. The association has been instrumental in marketing the state, attracting companies, creating partnership, attracting investment, and advocating for policies that make our state more competitive and attractive to emerging bioscience and medical device innovators.

BioND continues to be a critical partner in telling the story of the North Dakota bioscience sector and attracting bioscience and medical device companies to consider investing in their growth in North Dakota. Since 2019, the GFMEDC has engaged with more than 30 bioscience and medical device companies in collaboration with BioND. Many of these engagements have developed into exciting success stories such as Agathos Biologics, Aldevron, Checkable Medical, CorVent Medical, FamGenix, Genovac Antibody Discovery, TailWind MedTech, Theratec Inc., TWL Pharma Pac, Walkwise, and many more.

The GFMEDC has most recently partnered with BioND to organize two critical industry enhancing BioScience Summits, in 2023 and 2024 and is looking forward to continuing this annual partnership with our third Summit later this fall. The 2nd annual BioScience Summit, held in Fargo on September 17 and 18, 2024 welcomed more than 275 attendees from 16 states and countries like Israel, Norway and Singapore and has led to a number of ongoing project opportunities and strategic partnership conversations.

In the 15 years since BioND was established in 2010, the statewide GDP from the bioscience sector has grown from \$52.6 million to more than \$418.6 million in 2023 (a nearly ten fold in growth in 13 years). The bioscience industry employes approximately 1,467 with an average earning of \$111,516 per employee. Statewide job growth in the sector of 58% over the last 5 years has pushed jobs from 927 in 2018 to 1,476 in 2023 which far outpaces the national bioscience job growth rate of 22%. (Source: *Lightcast Q4 2024 Data Set*)

We have tremendous momentum in this space with world class research capabilities and talent production from our colleges and universities; powerful capital access programs for technology innovators through the Bioscience Innovation Grant (BIG), LIFT, PACE, and North Dakota Development Fund; and major ecosystem anchors like Aldevron and CorVent that are already attracting other biotech partners and collaborators to relocate to be near them. In recent years, the GFMEDC has seen increased interest from biotech and medical device companies from other states with several new firms locating here over the last few years.

We believe strongly in the potential of the biotechnology industry to become a future driver of North Dakota's economy and further believe that BioND is positioned to continue to be a major contributor to this success. As such, we would like to urge you to strongly consider supporting any upcoming funding requests for BioND.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ryan Aasheim', written in a cursive style.

Ryan Aasheim
Chief Business Development Officer