

Members of the Senate Appropriations Committee:

My name is Sarah Lovas and I am a farmer and agronomist from Hillsboro, ND. Currently, I serve as the Chair for the State Board of Agricultural Research and Education. Thank you for your previous support of the North Dakota Agriculture Research Station and NDSU Extension. Please support the draft language in SB2345 and fund the Livestock Research Facility Upgrades at three of the research Extension Centers (Carrington REC, Central Grasslands REC, and Hettinger REC).

Currently, the SB2345 bill draft includes \$446,000 for projects at the Carrington REC, \$1,963,000 for projects at the Central Grasslands REC, and \$3,420,000 for projects at the Hettinger REC. These improvements would enhance the ability of these Research Extension Centers to conduct livestock research by improving animal handling and safety for both the animals and the employees. These livestock facility improvements currently rank number two on SBARE's capital project list. Investing in these facilities would support the livestock industry in North Dakota and enhance NDSU REC's ability to collect and provide meaningful and useful data related to livestock nutrition, management, and cost of production. This research will lead to improvements in productivity and profitability in the livestock industry which can help drive North Dakota's economy

Although, not currently in the SB2345 draft bill, it is important to note the need for a couple of other capital projects. 1) A new Agronomic Research Building (Waldron Hall Replacement) at the Main Station in Fargo. The cost of this project would be \$70,000,000. The current building is outdated and too small to house the currently researchers and their staff. The old building is currently responsible for crop production research for all major crops in North Dakota. This is the number 1 on the SBARE Priority List for capital projects. 2) There is a need for machine sheds at the 7 REC's and the Main Station in Fargo (total cost of \$2,450,00 for all 7 sheds). Storing the equipment in machine sheds would greatly help the longevity of this specialized research equipment. The machine shed request is currently number 4 on the SBARE Capital list.

These capital project requests have been thoroughly vetted by SBARE through our prioritization process. If these capital projects were funded, you can be sure that this is a good investment for State dollars with a great ROI for the state. In fact, 1 out of every 4 people employed in North Dakota are connected to agriculture and ag research has a 40% return on investment.

Thank you for your time.

Sarah Lovas,

SBARE Chair