



**North Dakota Grain Growers Association  
Testimony in Favor of SB 2020  
Senate Appropriations  
Government Operations Committee  
January 16, 2025**

Chairman Wanzek, members of the Senate Appropriations Government Operations Division, for the record my name is Ryan Ellis. I am a family farmer and rancher from Williston, North Dakota and I am also the President of the North Dakota Grain Growers Association. I appear before you today in both capacities in support of SB 2020.

First of all, I would like to thank this Committee as well as the entire North Dakota Legislature for its tremendous past support of North Dakota agriculture and North Dakota research and extension. It is this support that continues to allow North Dakota farmers and ranchers lead the world in food production. No one does it better, and the North Dakota Legislature is a major reason for this effort.

Secondly, NDGGA strongly supports the State Board of Research and Education and their prioritization efforts regarding Ag research and extension. There are 49 other states in this nation that wish they had what North Dakota has enjoyed since Jack Dalrymple initiated the push to have stakeholder input regarding the needs of North Dakota agriculture.

The following are some reasons NDGGA is supportive of SB 2020:

**Core Research and Infrastructure Support**

The bill provides substantial funding across critical agricultural institutions:

- \$59.4M for NDSU Extension Service
- \$116.1M for Main Research Center
- \$40.6M for Branch Research Centers
- \$5.7M for Northern Crops Institute
- \$24.8M for Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute
- \$1.6M for Agronomy Seed Farm

### **Direct Benefits to Agriculture**

The funding supports essential services that directly benefit NDGGA members through:

- Development of innovative farming practices
- Soil conservation research and techniques
- Grain-specific technological advancements
- Extension services providing direct education and support to farmers
- Transportation and marketing research crucial for grain distribution

### **Strategic Research Network**

The bill maintains a network of research centers across different growing regions:

- Dickinson Research Center
- Central Grasslands Research Center
- Hettinger Research Center
- Langdon Research Center
- North Central Research Center
- Williston Research Center
- Carrington Research Center

This geographic distribution ensures research addresses region-specific challenges and growing conditions throughout North Dakota.

### **Financial Stability and Operational Flexibility**

The legislation provides important operational advantages:

- Maintains base level funding across institutions
- Allows centers to use mineral royalties for operational expenses
- Permits unexpended funds to carry over between bienniums
- Enables acceptance of additional funding from federal and private sources
- Includes mechanisms for oversight through agricultural research and education boards

### **Economic Impact**

The bill strengthens the agricultural economy by:

- Supporting rural economic development
- Helping farmers adopt modern techniques
- Enhancing crop yields and market competitiveness
- Developing new markets for northern-grown crops
- Improving transportation and distribution systems

### **CAPTS**

The bill has, as SBARE's number one priority, funding for the Center for Ag Policy and Trade Studies (CAPTS) at NDSU.

-CAPTS provides policy analysis and advocacy support which is critical in providing decision-makers on the state and federal levels with the necessary research on agricultural policies and trade issues that directly impact North Dakota grain producers.

-CAPTS specializes in studying the economic effects of agricultural policies and practices on the regional economy which greatly aids decision-makers and stakeholders in analyzing how specific policies could impact the region's farmers and ranchers.

-CAPTS is able to work with agricultural groups in customizing research and collaboration.

-CAPTS strengthens the agricultural sector by helping to drive innovation and well-informed decision making at all levels of agriculture.

In closing SB 2020 allows NDSU Research and Extension to advance agricultural innovation, sustainability, and economic growth in North Dakota. The bill's focus on research, education, and infrastructure development provides both immediate and long-term benefits to the agricultural community. Therefore the North Dakota Grain Growers Association strongly urges the Senate Appropriations Government Operations Division to give SB 2020 a do pass and would urge the full Senate Appropriations Committee and the full Senate to concur.