

January 18, 2021

The Honorable Ray Holmberg
Chairman, Appropriations Committee
North Dakota Senate
North Dakota State Capitol
600 East Boulevard Ave.
Bismarck, ND 58505

Re: Information Relative to SB2020, a bill for an Act to provide an appropriation for defraying the expenses of the North Dakota State University Extension Service, Northern Crops Institute, Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute, Main Research Center, Branch Research Centers, and Agronomy Seed Farm; to provide for a report; and to provide an exemption.

Chairman Holmberg and Members of the Senate Appropriations Committee:

As Vice President of the North Dakota Soybean Growers Association, I thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on SB2020.

As a soybean farmer near Rolette, North Dakota, my primary concern is the continuing attempt to cut base level support for NDSU Extension and Research, along with the Northern Crops Institute and Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute. While I earned my Masters in Ag Econ at Purdue, my classes at NDSU taught me the same thing: it is very challenging to obtain a 40 percent return on investment no matter where you put your money. I'm sure that you'd all agree.

Yet the North Dakota Ag Experiment Station produces trusted research with over a 40 percent return on investment. Restoration of 100 percent funding, which is a hold-even budget, is vital for essential research to continue. The Governor's proposed budget reduction would eliminate 33 research positions. Without these researchers, we as farmers would have no way to verify and compare yields for the seed varieties that we are considering. Or, we would have to tackle the challenges of managing saline and sodic soils without the science that NDSU researchers provide.

While I could provide additional examples, again, I ask that you continue the base level support for NDSU Ag Research.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on SB2020. I hope my comments are of value in your decision-making. I stand ready to answer any questions that you may have.
Respectfully Submitted,

Ryan Pederson
Vice President
North Dakota Soybean Growers Association