



U.S. Durum Growers Association

PROMOTING THE PRODUCTION AND MARKETING OF DURUM AND SEMOLINA

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Testimony of Steve Perdue

USDGA Director

In Support of HB 1431

Chair Bell and members of the Committee:

My name is Steve Perdue, and I am a farmer from Ray and a director for the United States Durum Growers Association (USDGA). On behalf of USDGA, I am here in support of HB 1431, specifically as it relates to the North Dakota State University (NDSU) Agricultural Products Development Center and Northern Crops Institute (NCI). USDGA recognizes the importance of updated facilities, as well as state-of-the-art technology and equipment to ensuring the growth and strength of the state's number one industry – agriculture.

The current facilities at Harris Hall no longer provide the space or safety needed to carryout research that is vitally important to the producers in our state. The Agricultural Products Development Center will allow NDSU to continue to deliver research-based solutions needed to ensure North Dakota's farmers and ranchers are able to produce and market superior commodities to global customers.

North Dakota produces around 50-60 percent of the nation's durum, and NDSU's durum breeding program is essential as no significant other public or private breeding programs exist. It is essential that the appropriate facilities exist to continue this research. In addition, Harris Hall hosts annual foreign trade delegations to showcase the quality of the regions crops for worldwide food production. Harris Hall's designation as one of the top two buildings in the poorest condition at NDSU and does not provide for a positive "showcase" of North Dakota's high-quality commodities.

Your support of the Northern Crops Institute (NCI) is also encouraged. Its collaborative efforts to support the promotion and market development of crops grown in a four-state region is more important than ever. NCI's educational and technical programs are essential to not only

maintaining but expanding domestic and international markets for northern-grown crops, including durum.

Agriculture is and will continue to be the foundation of our state's economy, and these facilities are essential to North Dakota agriculture maintaining its presence in the global marketplace. Therefore, we'd appreciate your support of the funding for the Ag Products Development Center and Northern Crops Institute within HB 1431.