We are a farm and ranch family in Oliver County who rely heavily on the services of the extension office. We do not have access to the many services that those in larger counties do. Keeping extension services in smaller counties is crucial. Closing our extension office would have a very negative effect on the economy of our county.

The extension office plays a major role in educating our rural people about the constant changes in agriculture, they provide resources about weed control, marketing, programs just to name a few. Another area to consider is the 4-H program. Our six children were all very involved in 4-H throughout high school. The knowledge, leadership skills, public speaking skills and life skills they gained through 4-H are very evident in their career choices. This is my 30th year as a 4-H leader so I am very aware of how valuable extension is to our 4-H program. Currently, 4-H is very active in our county, thanks in large to our extension services. We do not want to lose 4-H!! They are our next generation of farmers, teachers, business leaders, etc. It has been suggested that our members go to another county for 4-H. Many members have already stated it would be too far to drive-40+ miles, one way.

I am asking that all counties be treated alike. It is not fair to expect the small counties to cover the lack of funds. The current model of extension services is the best. Please keep extension as it is. We have a good plan in place, don't change it. Keep small communities strong!!