RE: The State Board of Agricultural Research and Education for North Dakota proposal to close six NDSU Extension Service county offices.

1. The NDSU Extension office including 4H, county fairs and the local presence of an extension agent who lives in the community is a positive face-to-face influence on current and future farmers, ranchers and professionals that will want to raise their families in North Dakota.

2. The NDSU Extension office is a critical competent of the economic health of small town and a trusted unbiased resource for rural counties with small and medium operations.

3. The short-term gain of 1% savings in the budget by cutting 10% of the Extension Offices in the state will have disproportionate, long-term negative effects.

4. The sacrifice of some of your most effective offices will be far more costly and difficult to rebuild when the economic outlook improves.

Your website proclaims, “Although times and technologies have changed since the Cooperative Extension Service was created in 1914, the NDSU Extension Service continues to be responsive to people’s local needs and remains committed to extending knowledge and changing lives now and in the future.”

I strongly urge you to commit to having an extension office in every county and find another way to balance your budget.

Sincerely,

Dennis Ristvedt