December 1, 2017

State Board of Agricultural Research and Education (SBARE)
NDSU Dept. 7520
PO Box 6050
Fargo, ND 58108-6050

RE: Williston Chamber of Commerce Stands behind Ag Research and Extension Needs in Northwest North Dakota

Dear SBARE Members:

As you establish your priorities for the 2019 Legislative Session, we at the Williston Chamber of Commerce, ask you to keep in mind the needs of northwest North Dakota. Here in Williston, we have a vibrant business community which relies upon the continued economic success of the agricultural sector and a healthy, robust work force. The priorities for Williston are to 1) build a new seed cleaning facility and a greenhouse at the Williston Research Extension Center (WREC), 2) ensure the continued funding of the pulse crop breeding program at NDSU and to 3) restore our dedicated Family Nutrition Program (FNP) Extension Agent. Please see the attached justification statement for a new seed cleaning facility and greenhouse provided by the Williston REC.

The Williston Chamber of Commerce is grateful for this opportunity to provide SBARE feedback on the critical needs of our region. We can assure the board that investment in the northwest region of the state will yield long-term dividends, as we have a tradition of private-public partnership in this region and the economy here is growing at an incredible rate. We hope the board will acknowledge the contribution Williston area makes to the state economy and promote investment in our region to leverage these resources for the benefit of the people of North Dakota.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Janna Lutz
President, Williston Area Chamber of Commerce

cc: Board of Directors, Williston Area Chamber of Commerce
Justification for a New WREC Seed Cleaning Facility

The current foundation seed conditioning facility was built in 1954, making it the oldest and most outdated seed cleaning facility at the Research Extension Centers. The area designated to load and unload trucks only accommodates small single axle trucks. Grain legs that move the dirty and clean grain are worn out and need replacement. WREC asked two companies to give bids to replace the grain legs, however, upon inspection of the seed cleaning facility, neither company supplied a bid because the legs run through four floor levels and the companies found it would be very difficult to replace the legs, and it would not cost effective. With this outdated facility, WREC is currently limited to cleaning a maximum of 35 bushels per hour. Equipment for the distribution and conditioning of grain is currently located on five different floor levels in the building, requires constant stair climbing during seed cleaning operations and is not designed to readily accommodate air exchange and dust control mechanical features to address worker safety concerns. The conditioning plant is necessarily cleaned thoroughly at every floor level between each crop variety that is conditioned to insure seed purity for Foundation Seed. This is a task that takes two people approximately ten hours to complete and occurs about 15 times each season. Cleaning capacity would be increased from 35 bushels/hour to 200 bushels/hour (50% capacity), with new horizontal cleaner equipment and seed cleaning facility downtime would be significantly reduced and safety concerns would be addressed. The vertical seed cleaning plant at the research extension center is also not suitable for cleaning pulse crops and other crops that require both soft handling equipment and horizontal seed cleaning equipment.

New seed cleaning technologies and superior systems now available for the production of pure genetics include optical (color) sorters that require operation in heated climate controlled buildings. Optical sorters at WREC would enhance seed purity and germination by sorting out unwanted material, diseased and insect damaged seeds, unwanted seed types, etc. With the increase of transgenic and identity preserved traits in the crops and crop varieties grown in North Dakota, and the increased WREC acreage for seed production, the role of the Williston Research Extension Center in pure seed increase of both transgenic and conventional crops has increased dramatically. It is certainly justified to update the seed cleaning facilities at the Williston Research Extension Center to provide genetically pure seed supplies of breeder seed and foundation seed of small grains, oilseeds, pulse crops, and other specialty crops to certified seed producers throughout North Dakota to quickly transfer the economic benefit of new improved crop varieties to the farm gate and producers in North Dakota.

Justification for Authorization to Raise Funds for WREC Multi-Use Greenhouse Facility

Description: 30’ x 100’ greenhouse. All Aluminum frame/structure (mill finish) w/Lauer system of framing, 16mm Deglas Acrylic, ventilation system, evaporative cooling system, automated environmental controls and software, permits, plumbing, heating, electric power and control wiring, irrigation system, doors, and concrete/ masonry, (16) rolling benches 5’ x 24’, crop lighting: (32), and automated shade/ heat retention curtain system. The WREC laboratory addition
completed in 2011 was designed to handle the electrical, heating, and water requirements for this greenhouse.

**Justification summary:** The greenhouse will be used to enhance the following WREC cooperative research and outreach programs:

1. Provide greenhouse facilities for applied plant pathology research for the new WREC Plant Pathologist position hired on September 29, 2015. Proposed research includes assisting breeders in selecting for root rot resistance in pulse crops, studying the effect of seed applied fungicides on nodulation in pulse crops and determining fungicide efficacy.
2. Perform greenhouse studies to support new cropping systems and field research activities on seed/seedling quality and plant health.
3. Horticulture Research and Education Project- Greenhouses are an integral part of a successful horticulture research and extension program.
4. Produce plants for demonstration and hands on activities at winter grower education events.
5. Donated and local funds would be utilized for the purchase and installation of the greenhouse.