

May 3, 2021

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
Chairwoman
Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, & Forestry
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Boozman
Ranking Member
Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, &
Forestry U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable David Scott
Chairman
House Committee on Agriculture
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Glenn Thompson
Ranking Member
House Committee on Agriculture
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Stabenow, Ranking Member Boozman, Chairman Scott, and Ranking Member Thompson,

Thank you for your support for agricultural research, education, Extension, and innovation. As you consider new initiatives to support rural America and investments in the agricultural economy, we strongly urge you to include a federal agricultural research infrastructure investment of \$11.5 billion over a period of five years at U.S. colleges of agriculture. Such an investment is necessary to advance the critical work being done at institutions across the country to support American jobs, recruit a diversity of talent for the agricultural science pipeline, address our climate challenges, and ensure ongoing U.S. leadership in food and agricultural innovation.

Modern agricultural research and education facilities serve as the backbone of the nation's cutting-edge research and applied science solutions. A report recently assessed the state of facilities at U.S. colleges and schools of agriculture, reporting that 69 percent of these buildings are at the end of their useful life. The report estimated the cost to upgrade deferred maintenance for these buildings now as \$11.5 billion, and the cost to replace the dilapidated facilities as \$38.1 billion. It further stated that strategic federal investment in these facilities at 1862, 1890, 1994, and insular land-grant and non-land-grant schools of agriculture would create 200,000 new jobs nationwide. Finally, this investment would contribute to solving the need for the U.S. to recruit and graduate 60,000 new U.S. graduates with agricultural expertise every year.

The pandemic has laid bare gaps and challenges in the American economy, but also demonstrates that the research, education, and Cooperative Extension outreach performed by the nation's colleges of agriculture have never been more relevant. The U.S. cannot rebuild our agricultural research prominence or keep up with international competitors when our research is done in facilities from the 1950s and 1960s. A transformative investment of \$11.5 billion in agricultural research infrastructure at colleges of agriculture would be a significant first step in an overall strategy to ensure that the U.S. remains globally competitive. Our request reflects plans to invest in research and development by providing land grant universities with funding to upgrade their research infrastructure, including brick-and-mortar facilities and computing capabilities and networks. With this type of once-in-a-generation investment, we can position the U.S. agricultural

sector to take the lead in developing climate innovations that provide new economic opportunities for farmers, ranchers, and producers.

This investment would reposition the United States for long-term success in food and agricultural research, education, and Extension, accelerate rural and urban economic recovery, achieve more diversity and equity in agriculture, and create the next-generation infrastructure needed to address the food and production challenges of feeding a growing world population.

Sincerely,

*Includes national and regional organizations.

National

AGCO Corporation
AgCountry Farm Credit Services
Agricultural & Applied Economics Association
American Association of Bovine Practitioners
American Association of Mycobacterial Diseases
American Association of Small Ruminant Practitioners
American Association of Swine Veterinarians
American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges
American Dairy Science Association
American Farm Bureau Federation
American Frozen Food Institute
American Malting Barley Association
American Mushroom Institute
American Olive Oil Producers Association
American Phytopathological Society
American Seed Trade Association
American Society for Horticultural Science
American Society for Microbiology
American Society for Nutrition
American Society of Agronomy
American Society of Animal Science
American Society of Plant Biologists
American Veterinary Medical Association
Aquatic Plant Management Society
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities
BASF Agricultural Solutions
Biotechnology Innovation Organization
Brewers Association
Cherry Marketing Institute, Inc.
ConAgra Brands
Consumer Federation of America
Corteva
Council for Agriculture Research Extension & Teaching
Crop Science Society of America

CropLife America
Dairy Farmers of America
Davis Family HLDGS
Entomological Society of America
Farm Credit Council
Farm Journal Foundation
FASS
Hormel Foods
Minority Farmers and Ranchers Advisory Committee
Mycobacterial Diseases of Animals – Multistate Initiative
National Agriculture in the Classroom Organization
National Aquaculture Association
National Association for the Advancement of Animal Science
National Association of Conservation Districts
National Association of State Departments of Agriculture
National Association of Wheat Growers
National Barley Growers Association
National Barley Improvement Committee
National Bison Association
National Cattlemen's Beef Association
National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research
National Cotton Council
National Grange
National Milk Producers Federation
National Onion Association
National Peach Council
National Pork Producers Council
National Sunflower Association
National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition
Noble Research Institute, LLC
Non-Land Grant Agriculture and Renewable Resources Universities
North American Craft Maltsters Guild
North American Invasive Species Management Association
NQV8, LLC.
Produce Marketing Associations
Roberts Associates
Rock Family Foundation
Schwan's Company
Society for Range Management
Soil Science Society of America
Supporters of Agricultural Research (SoAR) Foundation
The Breakthrough Institute
The Fertilizer Institute
The Scoular Company
U.S. Canola Association
U.S. Wheat Associates, Inc.
Union of Concerned Scientists
United States Cattlemen's Association

US Bank
US Dairy Forage Research Center Stakeholder Committee
US Rice Producers Association
US Sweet Potato Council
USA Rice
Weed Science Society of America
Wine Institute
Yara North America

Regional

Association of 1890 Research Directors
Association of Southern Region Extension Directors
Cape Fear Farm Credit
Christensen Farms
Cobb-Vantress, Inc.
Cotton Growers Cooperative
Delmarva Chicken Association
Diamond Bar Capital LLC
ISG
Legacy Land and Financial Consulting, LLC
North Central Cooperative Extension Association
North Central Regional Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors
North Central Weed Science Society
Northarvest Bean Growers Association
Northeast Equipment Dealers Assoc., Inc.
Northeastern Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors
Northeastern Weed Science Society
Northern Pulse Growers Association
Northwest Aquaculture Alliance
Northwest Farm Credit Services
Pacific Northwest Canola Association
Plains Grains, Inc.
Prime Dirt Midwest Inc
Southern Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors
Southern Weed Science Society
Western Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors
Western Growers
Western Society of Weed Science

CC: House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies

**Contact Caron Gala at cgala@aplu.org for the state listing or reach out to your local institution for more information on the request.*