

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 17, 2010

The Honorable Herb Kohl  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Agriculture,  
Rural Development, Food and  
Drug Administration, and Related  
Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
184 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Sam Brownback  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Agriculture,  
Rural Development, Food and  
Drug Administration, and Related  
Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
190 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Kohl and Ranking Member Brownback:

We are encouraged that the National Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA), established in the 2008 Farm Bill, is well on its way towards providing the enhanced financial support necessary to strengthen the meritorious research, extension, and higher education programs conducted at America's land-grant universities and related institutions. We are particularly pleased with your recognition of the agency's key role in addressing critical national issues as evidenced by the enhanced funding provided by your subcommittee in the FY 2010 Agriculture Appropriations bill.

We are hopeful that the FY 2011 bill will build upon this support and further improve funding for the core NIFA programs that underwrite the research and extension capacity of the 1862, 1890, and 1994 land-grant institutions:

- Hatch Act appropriations support food and agricultural research at the land-grant universities created under the Morrill Act of 1862.
- Smith-Lever funding supports the full range of Cooperative Extension efforts at the 1862 institutions.
- McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry funding maintains forestry and natural resources research at the 1862 land-grants and other state universities.
- Evans-Allen Act appropriations support research at historically black land-grant universities established under the Morrill Act of 1890.
- 1890s Institutions Extension maintains Cooperative Extension programs at the 1890 land-grant universities.
- Extension Services at the 1994 Institutions address the unique needs of Native Americans through the 1994 institutions.

Federal appropriations for 1862 and 1890 programs are matched by the states with at least a dollar-for-dollar basis, with many states providing much more than the minimum statutory match. Given the extreme budgetary pressure that many states face in the current

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recession, the federal funding is more essential than ever. Because of the unique situation of 1994 Institutions, state matching is not required.

In addition to the programs listed above, we also urge you to provide a major increase to NIFA's flagship competitive grants program, the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI). Given the many critical national problems that AFRI is designed to address, it is important that you provide as much additional funding as possible.

Some key priorities that need immediate attention through enhanced funding for AFRI and the six capacity programs include:

- **Bioenergy.** The United States has successfully adopted policies promoting the production of renewable fuels and other bioproducts to improve national energy security and reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. There is a pressing need for additional research to decrease water use, improve soil fertility, and related environmental conditions. Additional economic analyses are also needed to better understand how food, feed, and fuel prices are interrelated.
- **Nutrition and Health.** Increased recognition of the effects of healthy diets in addressing the pervasive epidemics of obesity and diabetes requires expanded research to help understand the community and behavioral attributes of human nutrition. Such research will lead directly to more scientifically informed nutrition education and guidance programs delivered through the Cooperative Extension System.
- **Global Food Security.** Greater research, extension, and education funding is urgently needed to help at-risk countries develop appropriate agriculture systems. Targeted research will also have many benefits within the United States to fight plant and animal diseases that threaten public health and agricultural production.

Thank you for your consistent support for the research, extension, and teaching programs conducted at America's land-grant institutions and for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

  
Blanch R. Linsam

  
Olympia Snowe



Paul Bepler

Robert W. Benn

Mike Johanns

Jim Johnson

Debbie Stabenow

Amy Klobuchar

Mark Feingold

Mark Zinke

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Dick Lugar

Max Baucus

Mark F. Rubio

Ron Wyden

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