

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 4, 2024

The Honorable Glenn “GT” Thompson
Chairman
Committee on Agriculture
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Scott
Ranking Member
Committee on Agriculture
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
Chairwoman
Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and
Forestry
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Boozman
Ranking Member
Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and
Forestry
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

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

Enacting the Farm Bill this year is critically important to the agricultural sector in North Carolina. While there is still progress to be made, we are encouraged that both the House and Senate packages include mandatory funding for the Research Facilities Act (RFA). As you know, RFA is a priority for our land-grant university system nationwide, including both North Carolina State University (NC State) and North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University (NC A&T) in our state.

Both NC State and NC A&T require urgent upgrades to numerous agricultural and natural resources facilities on their campuses, including six of the core agriculture research and teaching laboratory spaces: Gardner, Kilgore, and Bostian at NC State; and Carver, Benbow, and Webb at NC A&T. These agricultural research and teaching facilities are all more than 50 years old and are among the oldest buildings used for research and teaching labs on campus.

Research capacity in these buildings and others performing important agriculture and natural resources research is severely limited by the lack of modern research utilities and spaces, including insufficient or inadequate fume hoods, backup power sources, modern climate controls, and building envelopes (windows, roofs, and exterior shells). In addition, a high percentage of off-campus research facilities and buildings needed for field research studies have a significant backlog of deferred maintenance. Beyond North Carolina, RFA funding would address a mounting maintenance backlog totaling more than \$11.5 billion at research facilities on campuses nationwide.

While NC State and NC A&T have continued to operate world-class research and extension programs despite these issues, they will be increasingly challenged to advance our nation's leadership in agriculture in deteriorating, outdated buildings. Again, we respectfully request that mandatory funding for the Research Facilities Act – a high-need, high-impact program – continue to be included in any Farm Bill that advances. Simply put, robust investment in the bipartisan Research Facilities Act is an investment in the future of agriculture in America.

Thank you for your consideration of this request, and please don't hesitate to contact our staff for any additional information.

Sincerely,



Deborah K. Ross
Member of Congress



Thom Tillis
U.S. Senator



Kathy Manning
Member of Congress



Ted Budd
U.S. Senator



Wiley Nickel
Member of Congress



Valerie P. Foushee
Member of Congress



Gregory F. Murphy, M.D.
Member of Congress