

United States Senate

September 20, 2018

The Honorable Sonny Perdue
Secretary
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed relocation of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Economic Research Service (ERS) and National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). Each of these agencies play a key role in our nation's food and agricultural research, education and extension services. It is imperative that the vital missions of ERS and NIFA are enhanced in relocating the agencies. I believe moving ERS and NIFA to Kansas will improve transportation and logistics options for personnel, increase USDA's ability to hire talented and qualified labor, provide a high-quality lifestyle for employees, and reduce capital and operating costs.

Being centrally located, Kansas offers convenient air travel from the Kansas City International Airport, Manhattan Regional Airport, and Wichita Dwight D. Eisenhower National Airport, to the vast majority of the continental United States. Kansas is ideally located for ground transportation to multiple cities, universities, and research institutions in the surrounding area. Reasonable transportation distances will offer ERS and NIFA greater access to top agricultural research initiatives across the country.

Kansas is home to a highly-skilled workforce as a result of the state's premier universities, research institutions, agricultural companies, and industry producer groups. The animal health corridor, stretching from Manhattan, Kansas to Columbia, Missouri, is the largest concentration of animal health companies in the world. As of 2014, 56 percent of the worldwide animal health, diagnostics and pet food sales were located within the corridor. Manhattan, Kansas is also the future home of the National Bio and Agro-defense Facility (NBAF), the nation's foremost animal disease research facility. The concentration of animal health companies and location of NBAF will not only complement the research capabilities of NIFA and ERS, but have also fostered a talented workforce that will help meet the personnel needs of USDA.

Our state is also served by world class public and private universities and numerous land-grant universities are located nearby in surrounding states, all of which will provide USDA direct access to many of the most capable graduates in the country. Overall, Kansas offers USDA access to a critical mass of intellectual capacity and employees.

Kansas is a great place to live and work, and ERS and NIFA employees will be welcomed to the state with open arms. Many Kansas communities have undergone significant development in

recent years and offer residents vibrant and exciting lifestyles. Kansans enjoy some of the shortest commute times in the United States and have convenient access to popular destinations in both metropolitan and rural areas of the state. Perhaps most importantly, the character of the people make Kansas a premier place to live and work.

I appreciate your focus on reducing government costs for U.S. taxpayers. You will find, on average, capital and operating expenses in Kansas are lower than Washington D.C. and competitive nationally. I share your desire to be responsible stewards of tax dollars and believe relocating ERS and NIFA to Kansas will further that shared goal.

Multiple Kansas communities intend to submit individual expressions of interest. I fully support each of these proposals and look forward to continuing to work with you on the relocation the USDA agencies.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jerry Moran". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Jerry Moran