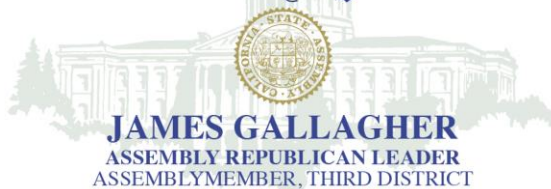


STATE CAPITOL
P.O. BOX 942849
SACRAMENTO, CA 94249-0003
(916) 319-2003
FAX (916) 319-2103

E-MAIL
Assemblymember.Gallagher@assembly.ca.gov

Assembly California Legislature



JAMES GALLAGHER
ASSEMBLY REPUBLICAN LEADER
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, THIRD DISTRICT

DISTRICT OFFICES
2060 TALBERT DRIVE, SUITE 110
CHICO, CA 95928
(530) 895-4217
FAX (530) 895-4219

1130 CIVIC CENTER BOULEVARD, SUITE F
YUBA CITY, CA 95993
(530) 671-0303
FAX (530) 671-0308

April 29th, 2022

Senator Nancy Skinner
Budget and Fiscal Review Committee
1020 N Street, Room 502
Sacramento, CA 95814

Assemblymember Phil Ting
Assembly Budget Committee
1021 O St. Suite 8230
Sacramento, California 95814

RE: California State University Colleges of Agriculture Infrastructure Funding

Dear Chairs Skinner and Ting:

We respectfully request that the Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee and the Assembly Budget Committee consider a proposal for a one-time appropriation of an additional \$100 million for infrastructure investments at the California State Universities with an Agricultural program: CSU Chico, CSU Fresno, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, and Cal Poly Pomona. This funding would be allocated toward infrastructure investments at each university's college of agriculture, which have proven to be a valuable asset to the quality of life in California and across the nation. This funding is necessary to repair and replace decrepit infrastructure, often over 50 years old, so these learning laboratories can continue agricultural innovation, sustainability, and cutting-edge practices. Current global challenges include climate change, food safety, animal welfare, water scarcity, soil health, labor, disadvantaged communities, fire suppression, and technology. The agricultural industry aims to produce more with less, reduce emissions, rebuild California's soil, and restore water resources. In order to accomplish all this, the industry requires multidisciplinary knowledge and technologies to optimize farming, food processing operations and natural resource protection and management. These colleges are key to climate resilience, economic development, and the food security of a growing global population.

The four campus University Farms seek additional one-time state funds totaling \$100 million, over two years, if needed. The funding will be divided into separate funding categories: 1) a second \$50 million in one-time state dollars for additional infrastructure focused on repairing and replacing obsolete and crumbling facilities; and 2) a third \$50 million in one-time state dollars for additional infrastructure when matched with \$50 million from industry and other non-state sources. This request is in addition to the \$50 million currently included in the Governor's proposed 2022-23 budget.

Cal Poly Pomona has five centers of agricultural learning laboratories that make up the Don B. Huntley College of Agriculture: AGRIsapes (20 acres), Spadra Farm (150 acres), Westwind Ranch (600 acres), Pine Tree Ranch (53 acres), and on-campus

facilities (325 acres). These 1,148 acres provide students with hands-on learning opportunities as they conduct research projects on research plots, learn to manage farms, produce crops, work with the local dairies, learn about animal husbandry, explore urban agricultural practices, experiment with water saving technology, and so much more.

At **Fresno State**, the Jordan College of Agricultural Sciences and Technology is home to the 1,000 acre on-campus University Agricultural Laboratory. Students explore the latest advancements in agriculture while managing livestock, field crops, a horticulture nursery, orchards, vineyards, and providing products year-round to the Gibson Farm Market. The Farm also includes the Water, Energy, and Technology (WET) Center, which established the Central Valley Regional Energy Center that will encourage business and technology innovation for agricultural, water, energy, and allied companies for two-thirds of the state. The Jordan Agricultural Research Center links Agriculture, Science, Mathematics, and Engineering students and faculty with industry leaders to nurture a cohesive research environment through interdisciplinary collaboration

Cal Poly San Luis Obispo's College of Agriculture, Food, and Environmental Science includes the Swanton Pacific Ranch (3,200 acres), Bartleson Ranch (450 acres), and 6,000 acres of land adjacent to the campus. It also has programs like the Strawberry Academy, which provides students with hands-on learning opportunities for research and production. The Dairy Innovation Institute supports the maintenance, growth and continued economic health of the dairy foods industry by conducting research that provides the scientific and technological basis for new and improved dairy food products and processes that utilize dairy-based ingredients. The Center for Sustainability is advancing sustainable food and agriculture systems through education, demonstration of sustainable agricultural practices, investigation, and facilitation of collaborative efforts for sustainability, both on campus and in the community.

At **CSU Chico**, the College of Agriculture houses the Paul L. Byrne Memorial University Farm (University Farm) and the Center for Regenerative Agriculture and Resilient Systems (CRARS). The 800 acre University Farm is the living laboratory for agricultural programs at Chico State. The Farm employs approximately 95 students each semester and hosts more than 10,000 visitors annually for farm tours, field days, industry seminars, and community events. It supplies another 5,000 community members with meat, nuts, beans, olive oil, and U-Pick Peaches.


The Center for Regenerative Agriculture and Resilient Systems (CRARS) is a nationally-recognized leader in regenerative agricultural education and applied research. The Center helps California farmers and ranchers as they transition to climate-smart agricultural systems that increase soil carbon, water-use efficiency, and quality, while sustaining yields and improving grower profitability. The Center is home to the Regenerative Agriculture Demonstration Soils Laboratory (RAD Lab) located at the University Farm, which provides training to students and the community on soil health and services on soil quality, food quality, and nutrient density. The Center also uses the Irrigation Training Facility for demonstrations on remote sensing technology and other new advances that optimize water use.

At CSU Chico, there is an urgent need to improve outdated facilities and equipment. Several of the older buildings are in such a precarious condition that they present a safety hazard and liability. Most buildings and/or facilities where the livestock units reside need critical upgrades in their infrastructure and their outdated equipment needs to be replaced with modern and state-of-the art technologies in precision agriculture to facilitate instruction, training, and research to address climate-smart agriculture.


Funding for the renovation and modernization of campus buildings, the construction of new facilities such as the Agriculture Learning Center, and the acquisition of precision agriculture technology at University Farm will enhance student experiential learning and training opportunities. Funding will also increase sustained and expanded conservation practices leading to increased ecosystem health and services. It will improve on-farm resiliency, including greater yields and profitability leading to increased producer well-being. Funding will also have positive health impacts as it will reduce dust from harvesting that will lessen health impacts to surrounding communities. In addition, many of the units also provide low cost/no cost student housing where students trade labor and management for housing.

These four universities are continuing to bolster the agricultural industry through research, innovation, new technology application, and community outreach. Funding is key to continue this important work. Investing in our Colleges of Agriculture is investing in California's future. If you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact us.


Respectfully,




James Gallagher
Assemblymember, 3rd District



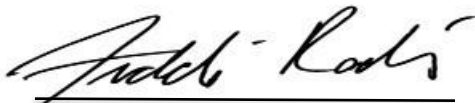
Blanca Rubio
Assemblymember, 48th District



Josh Newman
Senator, 29th District



Phillip Chen
Assemblymember, 55th District



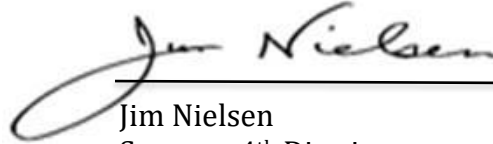
Freddie Rodriguez
Assemblymember, 52nd District



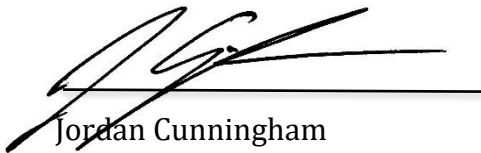
Jim Patterson
Assemblymember, 23rd District



Dr. Joaquin Arambula
Assemblymember, 31st District



Jim Nielsen
Senator, 4th District



Jordan Cunningham
Assemblymember, 35th District



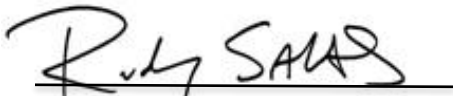
Devon Mathis
Assemblymember, 26th District



Connie Leyva
Senator, 20th District



Andreas Borgeas
Senator, 8th District



Rudy Salas
Assemblymember, 32nd District



Melissa Hurtado
Senator, 14th District



Anna Caballero
Senator, 12th District

Cc:

Assemblymember Vince Fong, Vice Chair, Assembly Budget
Assemblymember Kevin McCarty, Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee #2
Senator John Laird, Chair, Senate Budget Subcommittee #1
Mark Martin, Assembly Budget Subcommittee #2 on Education Finance
Chris Francis, Senate Budget Subcommittee #1 on Education