



ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COUNCIL

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June 28, 2019

Waded Cruzado, President
Montana State University
P.O. Box 172420
Bozeman, MT 59717-2420

Casey Lozar, Chair
Montana University System Board of Regents
PO Box 203201
Helena, MT 59620-3201

Dear President Cruzado and Chairman Lozar,

I write on behalf of the Environmental Quality Council (EQC), which continues its work to help state agencies collaborate with Montana State University to develop and site new combined facilities on the MSU-Bozeman campus for the Veterinary Diagnostic, Wildlife, Wool, Seed, Analytical, and Pulse Crop Diagnostic Laboratories. The recent discovery of chronic wasting disease in Libby underscores the urgency of providing a state-of-the-art space where Montana can better respond to the emerging needs of and conduct research for livestock, agriculture, and wildlife-related sectors.

President Cruzado, we thank you for your response to our letter, dated October 23, 2018, and understand your perspective that MSU and the University System do not have the financial capacity or authority to construct labs for use by state agencies. We agree that MSU has been a good partner by offering no-cost land leases to the existing facilities. Therefore, we ask that MSU and the Board of Regents commit to continuing this important partnership by providing a no-cost lease for land on the Bozeman campus where the new combined laboratories may be located. This assurance would provide a strong foundation for our continued efforts to secure funding for the facilities' construction.

President Cruzado and Chairman Lozar, we appreciate your consideration of this request. Please let me know if I, or the EQC staff, can be of assistance.

Sincerely,

Rep. Jim Keane, Chairman

cc: Martha Williams, Director, Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks
Mike Honeycutt, Executive Officer, Department of Livestock
Ben Thomas, Director, Department of Agriculture
Steve Baiamonte, General Services Division Administrator, Department of Administration
Fred Wacker, President, Montana Stockgrowers Association
Kevin Halverson, President, Montana Wool Growers Association
Senator Jon Tester
Senator Steve Daines
Representative Greg Gianforte

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