



April 28, 2021

Congressman Mike Simpson
2084 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Simpson:

On behalf of the Idaho Wheat Commission (IWC), I write and offer strong support of the Idaho Grain Producers Association's community funding project – the Idaho Grain & Ag Center. IWC's mission is to maximize profitability for Idaho wheat producers by investing funds in market development, research, and information and education. This project would provide space and infrastructure to execute the mission and advance Idaho's grain industry.

The current Idaho Grain & Ag building was built in 1945 and has not only been home to the Idaho Wheat Commission (IWC), who owns the building, but also numerous Idaho ag groups. It has become an agricultural hub adjacent to Idaho's Statehouse that provides an ideal agricultural presence in the urban setting of downtown Boise. Over the past 75 years, updates have been consistently made to the building, but it has reached a point where significant investments are needed. A new building is the most efficient way to bring the dilapidated office space up to a functional level now and for future operations.

The IWC has prudently and conservatively saved over 50 percent of the project cost and will pursue the most economically feasible path forward to replace the office building by working through the State Building Authority to bond \$3.5 million. An updated Idaho Grain & Ag Center will create a sustainable office and meeting space that solidifies Idaho agriculture's stature, enables tremendous collaboration between growers and agricultural groups, and allows for maximum return on investment of wheat assessments, so those dollars can go toward their core mission of investing in the advancement of wheat research, developing markets for Idaho wheat, and providing wheat grower education.

The community funded portion of the building project would serve all Idaho agriculture – there is significant need for a large meeting space among those of us serving Idaho's ag interests, and this proposal would fund a 1,314 square foot conference room, allowing large groups to meet. The proposal will also include some shared workspace to allow for other ag groups or growers to have space in the building. Maybe most importantly, the proposal includes funding for technology in the building to connect grower groups with groups throughout the state, nation, and world.

The IWC strongly supports IGPA's Idaho Grain & Ag Center community funded project proposal. Please let me know if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Casey J. Chumrau". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'C'.

Casey J. Chumrau
Executive Director
Idaho Wheat Commission