

February 24, 2010

The Honorable Richard G. Lugar  
United States Senate  
306 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510-1401

Dear Senator Lugar:

As the Senate begins the Fiscal Year 2011 Appropriations process, Purdue University respectfully submits for your consideration the *Midwest Center for Bioenergy Grasses*.

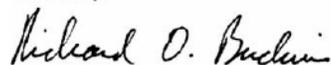
The Midwest Center for Bioenergy Grasses (MCBG) provides a national resource of research and education dedicated to optimizing bioenergy crops for their end-use in biofuels production. The Center's driving mission is to take the discoveries made in our laboratories into agronomic practice in a sustainable and environmentally sound way and to develop the technologies for optimal conversion of bioenergy grasses to biofuels and other value-added materials.

Grass species provide the most abundant potential feedstocks for biofuels, using lignocellulosic material from bioenergy crops and crop residues in addition to simple sugars produced and stored as direct photosynthate. The MCBG comprises four Thrust Areas that provide transformational research to improve biomass quantity and quality in bioenergy grasses and to develop chemical conversion pathways of lignocellulosic biomass to biofuels. The Center's goal is to more than double the carbon captured into fuel molecules compared to existing conversion routes and to expand the product range beyond ethanol to alkanes and new energy-rich aromatic liquid fuels and other value-added molecules currently made through oxygenation of petrochemicals.

The proposed research would have multiple impacts on economic development, both within Indiana and nationally. In the near term, job creation would likely be in start-up companies for technology development. Longer term impacts on job creation would be for all aspects of the biomass-to-biofuels pipeline, including agro-science companies interested in marketing seeds, farmers in deployment of engineered crops, construction and engineering companies in the building and operation of chemical-conversion biorefineries.

On behalf of President France Córdova, I thank you for your continued support of the students, faculty, and staff at Purdue University. We look forward to working with you to translate the technological advances made on our campuses into economic drivers for the State of Indiana.

Sincerely,



Richard Buckius  
Vice President of Research