



CAES

The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station

Putting Science to Work for Society

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123 Huntington Street

New Haven, CT 06511

203.974.8500

Toll free: 1.877.855.2237

Fax: 203.974.8502

Email: caes@ct.gov • portal.ct.gov/caes

Finance Revenue and Bonding

Bonding Sub-Committee

April 1, 2025

Good morning, Senator Miller, Representative Napoli, and members of the bonding subcommittee. My name is Dr. Jason White, Director of the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station. I am pleased to submit testimony on Governor Lamont's recommended capital budget for fiscal years 2026 and 2027 and give you an update on our current projects.

Governor Lamont has recommended \$1.2 million for fiscal year 2026 for "Alterations, renovations and improvements to buildings and grounds." \$200,000 of this funding would be used for a pre-design study of the Slate Laboratory building and the Osborne Library, the state's oldest structure and the oldest agricultural experiment station building in the country. The Slate Laboratory houses the administration and the Department of Environmental Sciences and Forestry. The three-story laboratory was opened in 1958, and there have been very few renovations and upgrades since then. The building has no elevator, is not ADA-compliant, and is no longer suitable for research. The remaining \$1 million would be used to replace a 75-ton HVAC rooftop unit on our Johnson-Horsfall Laboratory, which is 25 years old and is at the end of its useful life. The equipment frequently needs repair and is getting very expensive to keep running. Notably, this building houses the Biosafety Level 3 laboratory used for our vector-borne disease research and surveillance programs. The funding would also replace our two central steam boilers, which are about 30 years old and nearing the end of their useful life, becoming very expensive to maintain.

I am pleased to report that our two current projects are progressing well. The Jenkins-Waggoner greenhouse renovation project is substantially complete, with final punch list items being addressed. We will be moving into the new state-of-the-art space this month. I thank the committee for the \$1 million authorization and support! The Valley Laboratory renovation and addition is in the contract document phase and will be put out to bid in the coming weeks. The \$36.9 million project will renovate the existing building, which was constructed in 1940, and add a much-needed modern laboratory and greenhouse space to conduct 21st-century science. The Department of Administrative Services has submitted a request to the OPM requesting the remaining \$32,596,505 be allocated and made available at the next Bond Commission meeting. This would ensure no additional delays, and construction can begin this summer.

Thank you, and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have

Sincerely

Jason C. White, Ph.D.
Director

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