**Talking Points for the Governor’s Fiscal 2017 Budget Recommendation**

1. Thank you for the opportunity to visit with you today about two important programs that I am very supportive of at Michigan State University. MSU Extension and MSU AgBioResearch. These programs are important to me because they have impacted me/my farm/my family/my business/my community (discuss how Extension and AgBioResearch have impacted you.)
	1. I serve on the State Extension & AgBioResearch Council as a volunteer because of the high value I place on these programs.
2. I appreciate the Governor’s fiscal 2017 budget recommendation which includes a 2.3% increase in the budget lines that fund MSU Extension and AgBioResearch.
	1. I would however, like to point out that during the years of the Snyder administration, MSU Extension and AgBioResearch have been treated the same as the rest of higher education. Since these lines do not receive any support from tuition and are not subject to the performance based metrics that the state universities are, these two lines have traditionally received the average increase for the entire higher education budget. In the governor’s recommendation that would be 4.3%.
	2. Extension & AgBioResearch are critical programs in our community. They allow us to be competitive, contribute to the quality of life, and provide valuable programs for our youth.
	3. I would encourage you to continue the traditional support for these two programs and set the increase for fiscal 2017 at 4.3%.
3. I also want to express support for the governor’s recommendation of a 4.3% increase for all of higher education. Workforce development is a critical issue for the ongoing growth and development of agriculture and natural resources in Michigan. The overall impact of higher education and research at universities like MSU will continue to be critical to the economic turn-around of Michigan.

**The Ask**

* I am asking you to support MSU Extension/AgBioResearch at 4.3%, which is the same as the average increase for higher education in the governor’s higher education budget.
* I also encourage your support of a general fund increase for the MSU main campus. Our land-grant university is a powerful economic engine and is a sound investment in the future of Michigan.
* Can I count on your support of the Governor’s recommended budget increase for Michigan State, MSU Extension and AgBioResearch?
* Thank you for your time and thank you for your support of MSU, Extension and AgBioResearch.