

Statement To the Committee on Taxation March 14, 2017

James D Bever

Foundation Distinguished Professor

Kansas Biological Survey and the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology

University of Kansas

I work on plant microbiomes, including soil microbes that improve plant nutrition and plant pathogens. I am here to affirm the value of *The Land Institute* to research universities in Kansas. This value is manifest in three ways.

1. Support for collaborative training of graduate students and postdocs.

Three postdocs and a graduate student, who work with professors of Geography, Environmental Science, Ecology and the Kansas Biological Survey, are currently funded at the University of Kansas to work collaboratively with *The Land Institute* scientists. These students and postdocs work on approaches to maximizing the benefits of soil microbes to plant productivity in agricultural systems and prairies, approaches to minimizing the deleterious effects of pathogen build-up on crops and pastures, monitoring of plant nutrient uptake and monitoring of carbon fixation. Since 2016 the joint *Perennial Agriculture Project* affiliated with *The Land Institute* has provided \$168,398 to KU since 2016 and an additional \$202,256 is contracted to support work at KU over the next two years.

2. Enhanced research stature in Kansas.

The presence and success of *The Land Institute* enhances the research profile of the state of Kansas. I was recruited to Kansas from Indiana University, where I was a professor for 16 years and a major reason we moved was the opportunities to work with *The Land Institute* scientists.

3. Enhanced opportunities for external funding of research.

I have only been in Kansas for a bit over a year but I have written two proposals to the National Science Foundation that include collaboration with *The Land Institute* Scientists and incorporation of *The Land Institute* properties into larger sampling regimes. One of these proposals included 7 KU scientists with a budget of 2 million. And the second proposal has a budget of 20 million and includes scientists from Wichita State, Fort Hays State, Kansas State and KU. These pending proposals are on top of a current National Science Foundation grant testing benefits of soil microbes on *The Land Institute* properties.