

Over the last 150 years, Land-Grant Universities (LGUs) have transformed the United States. There have been calls in recent years to expand the LGU system. Before considering such an expansion, it is critical to better understand the historical context of LGUs and the challenges they are facing today.

The current LGUs comprise a congressionally mandated, mature nationwide network of institutions with shared identities and funding partnerships (federal, state, and local). Their missions are to provide research, Extension, and education to benefit the U.S. public. Over time, there has been a redirection of the LGUs' resources to more fully serve new populations and implement programmatic efforts to address societal challenges unforeseen when LGUs' missions were codified. This has often resulted in program curtailment, staff reductions, and structural consolidations.

In order to address traditional issues, as well as new global challenges, adequate resources are needed to support the current LGUs. Any expansion of the current LGU network would dilute existing financial support and put even further stresses on these institutions. Even in times absent of budgetary stresses, the current level of support of LGUs and their distinctive nature and history would argue against such an expansion. Therefore, the Board on Agriculture Assembly at APLU opposes such an expansion.