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Dr. Jeffrey S. Thompson
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Dean Thompson:

I am profoundly opposed to the slated 52% reduction in funding for the Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology (NBMG). A reduction in funding of this magnitude for such a significant public entity lacks foresight in planning. Not only is the planned reduction in funding unreasonable, it also demonstrates a lack of information regarding the importance of the NBMG as an educational, research and community-based agency.

I am a constituent of education, citizen of Nevada, and subsequently, a stakeholder in the continued operations of the NBMG. Although there are many reasons why the reduction in funding for the NBMG should be mitigated to a more reasonable level, I will identify and support three of the most vital reasons.

First, the NBMG serves as an exceptional educational resource. As an educator, and graduate student, I personally have utilized the NBMG to obtain geologic maps, earthquake hazard maps, and mineral education materials for use in curriculum development, programming, daily lessons, and graduate coursework. In addition, representatives of the NBMG have always been willing guest speakers in my classrooms, and many of my students have expressed career aspirations in the geological sciences after interactions with NBMG scientists.

According to the NBMG, about 80% of Nevada lacks adequate, modern geologic maps. This was apparent when I recently taught my middle school students about earthquake hazards. Students living in Dayton or Gardnerville, for example, were not able to view the potential geological hazards where they live, because an updated map is not yet available. It is clearly evident that continued funding for the NBMG to construct geologic maps is absolutely necessary!

Second, the NBMG serves as a potent research environment for topics concerning the economic development of the State of Nevada. The NBMG has made mining operations in Nevada an economic and academic example for the rest of the world. Furthermore, the NBMG has the incalculable potential for driving Nevada to become a leader in geothermal energy and in the mapping of economic mineral deposits. As a graduate student at the University of Nevada, Reno, I have had the opportunity to personally witness and take part in the effective research taking place at the NBMG.

Lastly, the NBMG serves as a communal scientific resource for Nevada's citizens. In reminder of the Wells, NV and Mogul, NV earthquakes and in light of the recent devastating earthquake and tsunami in Japan, I am again reminded of a need for a local resource that can provide accurate and applicable geologic and geophysical information. Nevada lies within the boundaries of an active seismic zone, and NBMG research continues to provide accessible information for citizens that can save lives and protect property.

I implore you to consider: is a drastic cut to NBMG funding a tradeoff that we really want to make for the sake of a simpler budgeting plan? I am convinced that the function and operations of the NBMG should remain as uncompromised as possible. Therefore, I am looking forward to the introduction of a vastly more reasonable reduction in funding plan for the Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology.

Sincerely,



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