



^b
**UNIVERSITÄT
BERN**

Philosophisch-
naturwissenschaftliche Fakultät
Astronomical Institute

Astronomisches Institut, Sidlerstrasse 5, CH - 3012 Bern

Drs Milton Glick and Marc Johnson
President's Office
University of Nevada, Reno
Reno, NV 89557-001
U S A

Bern, March 28, 2011

Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology (NBMG)

Dear Drs Glick and Johnson

Let me briefly introduce myself: I am the director of the Astronomical Institute of the University of Bern (AIUB), chair of the Galileo Science Advisory Committee (Galileo is the upcoming European Global Navigation System), and member of the IGS Governing Board. I was chairing the IGS (International GPS GNSS Service) Campaign Oversight Committee 1991-1993, then the official IGS Service from 1994-1997. I became the International Association of Geodesy's (IAG's) President in 2003-2007. As international relations are a key element in such activities, I am – among other – very much aware of NBMG's standing and reputation in the international and national science communities.

It was therefore a big shock for me to learn that the administration of the University of Nevada plans to cut over half of the Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology's (NBMG) state budget. This drastic measure would inevitably lead to the layoff of highly qualified staff and faculty members. It will severely affect NBMG's ability to conduct research on the impressive level reached in the past.

Frankly, I cannot understand why the University of Nevada should hinder NBMG to play its important role as a thriving force in a state that has an abundance of minerals and geothermal potential and is, on the other hand, exposed to important geohazards.

I am furthermore not convinced of the plan to fold NBMG in with the Department of Geological Sciences and Engineering – a measure which would inevitably lead to a significant loss of the high profile the Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology currently has in science and in its important service to society.

Prof. Dr. Gerhard Beutler
Direktor
Sidlerstrasse 5
CH - 3012 Bern

Tel +41 (0)31 631 85 96
Fax +41 (0)31 631 38 69
gerhard.beutler@aiub.unibe.ch
<http://www.aiub.unibe.ch>

Let me add a few words about the NBMG's Nevada Geodetic Laboratory. This laboratory has a worldwide reputation, which it owes to its research professors. Let me mention in particular Prof. Geoffrey Blewitt, with whom I worked closely together to make the IGS a success in the 1990s. He is a world leaders in Space Geodesy and not only in GPS. His achievements are best documented by his publication record, which underline his leadership in GNSS methodology and his talent to attract the attention of the wider science community, e.g., with articles in journals like "Science" and "Nature". Geoff is a true asset to the University of Nevada. Let me also mention Prof. Hans-Peter Plag, who played a key role in the deployment of IAG's GGOS (Global Geodetic Observing System). He was in particular pulling together the "IAG bible" "GGOS 2020 – Meeting the Requirements of a Global Society on a Changing Planet in 2020". The list of outstanding achievements might be made much longer – but I am convinced that you are aware of these facts, as well.

The University of Nevada should be proud of its Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology. NBMG should retain its independence as an entity of the University of Nevada and should not suffer devastating budget restrictions endangering its existence and its strong service record.

Hoping to have served you with these remarks I remain with kind regards

Yours sincerely

Gerhard Beutler

Director, Astronomical Institute, University of Bern
Hans-Fischer Senior Fellow, Institute for Advanced Study, T.U. Munich
Vening-Meinesz Medalist, European Geophysical Union
American Geophysical Union Fellow
U.S. National Space-Based Position Navigation and Timing Advisory Board
Chair, Galileo Science Advisory Committee, European Space Agency

Copy to:

- Dr. Jeff Thompson
- Dr. Jon Price
- Prof. Geoff Blewitt