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Drs. Glick and Johnson
President's Office
University of Nevada, Reno
Reno, NV 89557-001

March 21, 2011

Dear Drs. Glick and Johnson

I am writing in support of the Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology (NBMG), which is presently scheduled for an enormous cut in state support. I believe that I am also offering advice that could benefit your university and your state.

Many of the greatest challenges facing Nevada, the USA and the world in general are geological or geophysical in nature. These include the energy crisis, climate change, shortages of natural resources (water, metals, salts, etc.), and increasing vulnerability to natural hazards. These are challenges with major economic and well as societal implications. NBMG is the major player in Nevada in terms of addressing these important issues, and several others. For example, the group within NBMG that I am most familiar with, the Nevada Geodetic Laboratory (NGL), has been performing outstanding – literally world class - work on geothermal resources, on mapping changes in aquifers based on vertical surface motions, and on a wide range of natural hazards in Nevada and surrounding areas, including Yucca Mountain in southern Nevada. Most leading universities in the USA and in Europe would be delighted to host a laboratory such as the NGL, but UNR seems to undercutting one of jewels in its crown by targeting NBMG in so severe a manner. I suggest that UNR is in danger of losing many if not most of its most talented scientists within NBMG.

I understand that the state has forced a huge cut onto the university, and university leaders must cut internal budget allocations in response. But it seems to me that you are planning to cut one of the most accomplished groups of scientists in your entire institution, and one that brings in brings in large amount of external funding, and therefore leverages its state funding better than the majority of units within your university. Surely it would make sense to cut far less accomplished parts of the University, ones that do not serve the reputation of your institution, nor the economic and public interests of your state so well.

Sincerely

Michael Bevis
Ohio Eminent Scholar and Professor of Geodynamics