



College of Science
University of Nevada, Reno

Mackay School of Earth Sciences and Engineering
Building on the traditions of the Mackay School of Mines

March 21, 2011

Assemblyman David Bobzien
1605 Wesley Drive
Reno, NV 89503-2332

Dear Assemblyman Bobzien:

I am writing to express my concern with the proposed cut to the Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology (NBMG), the statewide research and public service unit that serves as the State geological survey. The NBMG's mission, to provide the State's needs for geological and energy- and mineral-resource information and research, is incredibly valuable to the citizenry of Nevada. The public outreach that the NBMG accomplishes by its publications, information office and educational activities keeps our community aware and connected to the research conducted both by the NBMG and by the University of Nevada, Reno.

In light of the current tragedy due to the earthquake and tsunami in Japan, as well as previous natural disasters in Haiti and Chile, we all know how important organizations like the NBMG are in disseminating information to the people who need it, both first-responders and the general population. Nevada is at high risk for many kinds of natural disasters. A major earthquake either in the Las Vegas or Reno-Carson City areas could cause hundreds of fatalities and billions of dollars in economic loss. NBMG's continued work on locating active faults, mapping areas of potential liquefaction and landslides, measuring stresses with geodetic instruments, informing decision makers about options to reduce risks from vulnerable buildings, and informing the public about earthquake hazards is essential to saving the lives of our citizens and visitors. Nevada is also at risk for major flooding, both in the northern and southern parts of the state, and the NBMG is actively involved in mapping and reporting these hazards. Their reports have assisted organizations such as the Clark County Regional Flood Control District in its disaster-prevention efforts.

I stress that the value of the NBMG to the University and the people and state of Nevada is very large relative to its small \$2.1 million budget. I urge you to consider maintaining the funding to keep the NBMG whole and running at full capacity. If not through general funds, then perhaps a part of the Net Proceeds of Minerals tax should be redirected to support the NBMG.

Sincerely,

Rachel Dolbier, Administrator
W.M. Keck Earth Science and Mineral Engineering Museum

Director's Office
University of Nevada, Reno/168
Reno, Nevada 89557-0168
(775) 784-6987 office
(775) 784-1766 fax
<http://www.mines.unr.edu/Mackay/>