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Dear Sirs,

It is with much concern that I hear of the planned budget cuts to the Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology (NBMG). I'm dismayed at such a short-sighted move, given the intrinsic value of NBMG to the citizens of such a mineral rich and seismically active state. Others can better explain the economic implications for the mineral industry than myself, however I can think of no better analogy than the effect on Nevada's other major industry of closing down the Nevada gaming commission.

The value of NBMG is its dedication to full-time Geo-scientific research. Beyond the obviously devastating affects of such deep cuts in the short term you could be placing the long term geo-scientific infrastructure of the state in jeopardy. By infrastructure I mean years of research experience in addition to physical monitoring infrastructure. Do not be fooled into thinking that a full-time research entity is like any other university department, and can be as successful with its research co-existing with education.

I must emphasize that the value of the Bureau goes much farther than state borders. The Nevada geodetic lab, whose work I am most familiar with, is deeply ingrained in a rich and diverse network of geodetic research extending across national and international organizations. Without the staff employed by NBMG these research networks would suffer tremendously. One pertinent example is the tsunami research that was started after the devastating Sumatra tsunami of 2002. This work has lead to the co-development (alongside NASA JPL) of an automated tsunami warning system. Devastating recent events in Japan serve as quick reminder of the need for such systems. Similarly, it would be a catastrophe if the state geo-hazard monitoring capabilities developed by NBMG over the recent decade were to suffer because of a lack of manpower.

From a personal perspective, the Bureau launched my own career. The geodetic work being performed at NBMG is world leading. I worked as a post-doctoral scholar at NBMG 2000-2003 and went on to obtain a Royal Society research fellowship, and a faculty position at Delft University of Technology in 2007. It is unlikely I would have got so far without my 3 years at NBMG and both myself and the students and Post-docs I have supervised over subsequent years have benefited tremendously from the collaboration with NBMG. I therefore urge you to re-think your current plans,

yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David Lavallee". The signature is written in dark ink on a white background.

David A. Lavallee.