

From: Megan Muretta [mailto:MMuretta@slb.com]
Sent: Saturday, March 26, 2011 7:08 AM
To: tompsonj@unr.edu
Cc: Jonathan G Price; James E Faulds
Subject: Letter of support for NBMG

Dear Dr. Jeffrey S. Thompson,

As a graduate of the Mackay School of Earth Science and Engineering (class of 2006), I wish to express my sincere concern regarding the university's plans to cut the Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology's state funding. I feel this is a tragic mistake and I hope that you reconsider this plan.

As a student at UNR, I worked for the NBMG for approximately 3 years. The knowledge that I gained from this experience was invaluable to my success and has helped me to become the responsible and successful citizen that I am today. After attending UNR, I went on to obtain a masters degree in earthquake geology and am currently an engineer for a global oil services company. The NBMG was vital to preparing me for this career. More importantly I feel that the NBMG and other government programs such as this serve as a vital liaison between the scientific community and citizens of Nevada and the world alike. I feel cutting this tie would be an incredible disservice to society.

The role that the NBMG plays in educating the public alone should stand as evidence of its value. On the NBMG's website it states, "Along with California and Alaska, Nevada ranks in the *top three* states subject to the most large earthquakes over the last 150 years". Without a geologic survey, the public would be unaware of the hazards they face by living in Nevada. Where would people go to find maps and information about earthquake preparedness specific to Nevada if the NBMG did not exist? In the wake of the tragic events unfolding in Japan, I can't help to be severely concerned by the thought of taking away the NBMG from the people of Nevada. As we see in Japan, education and preparedness are the only hopes for survival in the case of a major environmental disaster. It is for this and many other reasons that I cannot express strongly enough the importance of having a state geological survey such as the NBMG.

If natural hazards are not enough reason for you to reconsider funding cuts then maybe you would appreciate more the economic value of the NBMG. Bang for your buck, I don't think you can spend tax payers' money in a more effective manner. The NBMG, through its collaborations with industry, produces a plethora of publications and maps that enhance the economic value of the state via mining of both precious metals and industrial minerals as well as recent geothermal resources. Geothermal resources alone could provide an unlimited energy resource for the state of Nevada. Still to this day the NBMG estimates that an astonishing 80% of Nevada lacks modern and accurate geologic maps! Think of all the resources – metals, industrial, geothermal, and water – that are yet to be discovered within that 80%. With the state of Nevada facing major budget shortfalls, I cannot see how Nevada can afford to lose such a valuable resource.

I strongly urge you to reconsider the importance of the NBMG to the State of Nevada as it not only provides economic benefits to the state but also helps to educate the public and students like myself, as well as protect people from natural disasters.

Best Regards,
Megan Muretta
Field Engineer

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