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March 22, 2010

Dean Jeff Thompson
College of Science
University of Nevada, Reno College of Science
Reno, NV 89557

Dear Dean Thompson,

On behalf of the Geothermal Energy Association and in particular its many Nevada members, I am writing to express our serious concern about the deep budget cuts being proposed for the Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology.

Geothermal electricity generation in the Western United States is an important alternative to fossil and nuclear power, and the U.S. Geological Survey estimates that less than 10% of this potential has so far been located and developed. Developments in science and technology, supported by federal and state public policies, have resulted in a strong growth in efforts to utilize more of the untapped geothermal resources. With over 100 new geothermal projects under development in the U.S., nearly half are located in Nevada.

NBMG has played an important role in supporting this growth. The Bureau's scientific and educational work facilitates new geothermal development in Nevada, and significant reductions in NBMG's efforts will adversely impact the future of geothermal energy in the state. Their research and education efforts have stimulated new exploration and the identification of new geothermal fields, particularly in Nevada. By helping federal and state agencies and private industry to better understand the geological underpinnings of the geothermal resource, NBMG supports sound and sustainable geothermal development in Nevada.

Supporting expanded geothermal development in Nevada pays substantial dividends to the state. According to the Nevada Geothermal Council, Nevada's geothermal industry creates thousands of long term, good paying jobs for Nevadans, generates millions in taxes, spends billions on Nevada vendors, generates state and county revenue from federal lands, and avoids the atmospheric discharge of 2.25 million tons of greenhouse gases annually.

Geothermal energy is still in its early stages of development in Nevada and the West. It needs continued support for sound science to maintain its growth, particularly in geology, geophysics, geochemistry and related disciplines. It is our strong view that NBMG is cost-effective in providing economic returns to the University of Nevada, Reno, and to the state. NBMG is an essential part of the scientific and educational infrastructure that is needed to sustain development of the state's underutilized geothermal resources.

We urge you to continue to support the work of the Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul A. Thomsen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end.

Paul Thomsen
President

cc: UNR President Glick
UNR Board of Regents