PURDUE
UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF CIVIL ENGINEERING

West Lafayette, February 22, 2005

Dear Committee Member,

My fields of research include rock mechanics, fracture mechanics, underground construction, and engineering geology. The Kimballton site offers a suitable location for this research to be pursued, and I will work as a member of the Kimballton team to help make this a reality.

In my research community there is a pressing need to investigate the behavior of rock masses at a very large scale. Theoretical models developed to approximate rock mass behavior and slip along discontinuities have been developed based mainly on experiments at the laboratory scale. There is still a disconnect between the laboratory scale and field observations made at the macroscale.

Kimballton offers the unique opportunity to conduct large scale experiments over long periods of time, and to bring together complementary disciplines that traditionally have been operating separately such as geology, rock mechanics, tunneling, hydrology, and earthquake engineering. The project will be the catalyst to bring in all specialists together, both scientists and engineers, working on different and yet complementary aspects of the problem, creating a synergistic environment conducive to a global and unifying understanding.

Sincerely,

Antonio Bobet
Associate Professor of Civil Engineering