

# ***Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II***

Prof. Stefano Mazzoli  
Department of Earth Sciences  
Largo San Marcellino 10  
80138 Naples, Italy  
E-mail: stefano.mazzoli@unina.it

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**Dr. Mark Pitt**  
**Department of Geosciences**  
**Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University**  
**Blacksburg, VA 24061**

*Re: Kimballton site DUSEL*

Dear Dr. Pitt,

Following a joint visit we did with Prof. Bruce Vogelaar and Prof. Robert Bodnar to the Italian Gran Sasso underground laboratory last November, I hereby would like to express my great interest and full support to the Virginia Tech proposal concerning the NSF-sponsored Deep Underground Science and Engineering Laboratory (DUSEL), involving its location at the Kimballton site in southwestern Virginia.

Besides the first-class physics, biological and engineering aspects of the project, I am particularly impressed by the multidisciplinary, process-oriented studies that could be carried out in the field of earth sciences at this unique site. This could also generate some very interesting and fruitful cooperative research. In particular, the similar geological setting of the classic Appalachian fold-thrust belt in the Kimballton area and that of the Apennines of central Italy, where the Gran Sasso underground laboratory is located, provides much scope for a comparative study of tectonic styles, fold-thrust structures, fault rock and fracture development and related fluid flow, fault-related compartmentalization of rock volumes, etc., in these two areas. A preliminary agreement on such a comparative study already exists with Prof. Robert D. Hatcher, Jr. (University of Tennessee at Knoxville), and I sincerely hope a successful progress of your proposal will also provide the opportunities to carry it out.

I would very much appreciate to be involved in this project, and wish you success with your proposal and in bringing the DUSEL to the Kimballton site near Virginia Tech.

Sincerely,

Stefano Mazzoli