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LETTER OF COMMITMENT TO DUSEL SITE SELECTION AND PROJECTS

Dear Committee Member,

My field of research is applied geophysics, specifically seismology. I have been involved with activities associated with the underground experimental facility for over three years, and have reviewed the potential qualities of all of the available proposed sites. The Kimballton site offers a highly preferred location for appllied geophysical research to be pursued, and I would work as a member of the Kimballton team to help make this a reality.

There are several features of Kimballton which appeal to me. These are primarily based on the fact that it is in sedimentary rocks of varying quality, at depths within the earth's crust which make observations there applicable to fields of study that are of huge importance to mankind and the future of natural resource evaluation and environmentally sound extraction. All of the other sites are in igneous or metamorphic rocks that, while providing interesting scientific observations, will not provide results, nor enable experiments, that will be as useful as those at Kimballton for improving our country's abilty to safely develop resources in manners that meet today's and tomorrow's requirements for environmental protection.

The engineering research community of which I am a member of should be represented in DUSEL because they include those people and organizations who actually develop and deploy the methods of most concern to the citizens of this country in the development and safe extraction of natural resources from within the earth's crust. This includes academicians and their research-engineering counterparts in industry and natinoal laboratories. Typically, research in the areas of shallow-crustal geologic characterization and flow of fluids are in the environmental and petroleum areas; only occasionally do the researchers in these two areas collaborate, often due to lack of common sites – a problem which Kimballton would alleviate. The petroleum-style researchers often work in collaborative teams representing several entities; often these are in the form of consortia of companies and universities, usually (although not always) operating under the leadership of one academic unit. Participation by industry can be either through monetary support or in-kind support, lending expertise, time, and often hardware and products.

The development of DUSEL at the Kimballton site will allow the output of DUSEL to have some actual applications that will return as benefits to the taxpayers of the country, as well as the interesting basic-science aspects available at any of the proposed sites.

Yours truly,

Wayne D. Pennington
Chair and Professor of Geophysical Engineering