February 25, 2005

The National Science Foundation
4201 Wilson Boulevard
Arlington, VA  22230

To Whom It May Concern:

As the Virginia Tech Vice President for Research, I am pleased to submit this letter of support on behalf of the institution's proposal for the Deep Underground Science and Engineering Laboratory (DUSEL). In the past year, in excess of a million dollars of institutional funds have been expended on our DUSEL proposal efforts. If selected to advance to the next phase, Virginia Tech is committed to expend the millions more needed for the geological and engineering characterization of our proposed location. The University's strong commitment stems from our desire to demonstrate to the scientific community and the National Science Foundation that we can offer a credible and uniquely qualified DUSEL location.

Sincerely,

Brad Fenwick
Vice President for Research

BF/php
Dr. Arden L. Bement, Jr.
4201 Wilson Boulevard
Arlington, Virginia 22230

Dear Dr. Bement:

We are writing to express our strong support for the National Science Foundation initiative to establish a Deep Underground Science and Engineering Laboratory (DUSEL) and specifically our support for establishment of DUSEL at a site in Giles County, Virginia. This national laboratory will significantly enhance the nation’s research infrastructure and provide unique opportunities for research in physics, earth and environmental sciences, hydrology, civil and environmental engineering, rock mechanics, mining engineering and microbiology.

A national team of researchers lead by Virginia Tech has identified a site that meets the requirements for a successful underground science and engineering laboratory. The site is located in Giles County, Virginia adjacent to the Kimballton limestone mine. The owners of the mine, Chemical Lime Company, have agreed to collaborate with Virginia Tech in this effort and there is strong local and State support for this endeavor.

Several research groups are preparing proposals to the National Science Foundation, advocating various sites for the laboratory. The U.S. scientific community will be most effectively served by selecting a site that offers the best opportunities to conduct a broad range of world-class science at a competitive cost. Other important considerations include operational costs over the estimated 50 year lifetime of the laboratory, the environmental impact of lab construction and long-term environmental effects associated with operation and working in the laboratory.

The proposed Kimballton site offers many advantages over competing sites. The geology at Kimballton is highly variable, permitting a broad range of science experiments. The site is suitable for many physics experiments designed to better understand fundamental processes operating in the Universe. At the same time, large blocks of fresh, homogeneous rock permit detailed studies to examine the effects of fluid flow and thermal and chemical perturbations on the natural system. Such information is becoming increasingly valuable as modern societies work to develop safe and effective means of deposing hazardous wastes. The lab would be hosted in sedimentary rocks, providing opportunities for state-of-the-art research related to oil and gas deposits, carbon management technology, management of water resources, development of new technologies to remediate contaminated aquifer systems and to safely explore for and produce natural resources and to study the limits of life in extreme environments. The rock that would be removed during construction is dominantly limestone, an environmentally benign rock compared to those that would be removed at competing sites.
We are pleased to have this opportunity to bring the Virginia Tech effort to your attention and we look forward to supporting this NSF initiative as the process evolves. We hope that you will give the Virginia Tech proposal the most careful and thorough consideration as you evaluate the scientific merit of this and competing proposals. Please treat this letter in conformance with all applicable procedural rules and ethical guidelines.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

George Allen

John Warner
February 25, 2005

Dr. Arden L. Bement, Jr.
Director, National Science Foundation
4201 Wilson Boulevard
Arlington, VA 22230

Dear Dr. Bement:

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We are pleased to have this opportunity to bring the Virginia Tech effort to your attention and we look forward to supporting this NSF initiative as the process evolves over the next several years. We hope that you will give the Virginia Tech proposal the most careful and thorough consideration as you evaluate the scientific merit of this and competing proposals. With kind regards, we remain

Sincerely,

[Signatures]

Rick Broncher  Eric Cantor

[Signatures]

Julie Davis  Thelma Drake

[Signatures]

Virgil Goode Jr.  Jim Davis

[Signatures]

Jim Moran  Bob Goodlatte
Dear Dr. Bodnar:

You asked for a short letter acknowledging that we are aware of your proposal to develop a conceptual plan for a deep underground laboratory in Giles County, beneath Butt Mountain. You also asked for a general description of various stakeholders and the permitting agencies that you might need to interact with, if this site was selected by the National Science Foundation.

We are fully aware of the scope of this proposal (including the potential visitor’s center), its implications for the Jefferson National Forest, and its importance. We’ve already worked with you on permitting the seismic survey work the Kimballton group accomplished last fall on the top of Butt Mountain. As we’ve discussed, the United States Forest Service will continue to work with you to review environmental issues pertinent to the portions of this project that would affect national forest system lands. The complexity of the environmental analysis will depend on the extent of ground disturbance and the proposed long term impacts to national forest lands. We would coordinate with the agencies (such as Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, Virginia Department of Historic Resources, and US Fish and Wildlife Service) needed to complete our environmental analysis. Our review would also include input from the public. You would need to coordinate directly with any permitting agencies who would be involved regardless of whether the location is on national forest or not.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact Bill Compton at 540-953-3564 or me at 540-552-4641.

Sincerely,

/s/ Cynthia R. Schiffer

CYNTHIA R. SCHIFFER
District Ranger

File Code: 2720
Date: February 24, 2005
February 23, 2005

Dr. Robert J. Bodnar  
DUSEL Project  
Department of Geosciences  
4044 Derring Hall  
Virginia Tech  
Blacksburg, VA 24061

Dear Dr. Bodnar:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you and the University for your hard work and dedication to the proposed DUSEL project here in Giles County. This project has tremendous potential to create meaningful and long-term employment for our citizens, as well as to diversify our economy with the required service industries.

Giles County will make every effort to work with you and the University to establish relationships with the local community and surrounding areas. We will offer any and all resources available to ensure that the public is well informed and has the opportunity to interact in this project. Giles County will also work with you, the National Science Foundation, and various funding agencies to develop the required infrastructure for the laboratory.

Once again, thank you for your work with the application. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you need any assistance or information.

Sincerely,

Chris McKlarney  
County Administrator
November 16, 2004

Charles W. Steger
President
Virginia Tech
210 Burruss Hall
Blacksburg, VA 24061

Dear Dr. Steger,

On behalf of the New River Valley Planning District Commission we would like to congratulate you on Virginia Tech’s aggressive approach into the rigorous scientific requirements of the National Science Foundation’s proposed DUSEL project. As the regional entity charged with the responsibility of planning development, we are perhaps uniquely qualified to comment positively about the appropriateness of the Giles County site for the DUSEL project and resultant economic development possibilities that the project would bring to the New River Valley. The Commission is fully supportive of the project and Virginia Tech’s efforts to locate it in Giles County.

As we understand the requirements for this project, Giles County and the New River Valley offer the National Science Foundation an unparalleled opportunity to conduct important research in an educational and physical environment that is unparalleled. In addition, this project brings the type of economic and tourism development that this region is well positioned to support.

In addition to the international draw of the proposed facility for research projects, it will also provide employment for the tremendous talent that your great university creates but is all too often exported from the region.

Thank you for your efforts to bring this amazing project to the New River Valley.

Sincerely,

(Handwritten Signature)

Annette Perkins, Chairperson
New River Valley Planning District Commission
February 25, 2005

Mr. Robert J. Bodnar
Department of Geosciences
University Distinguished Professor, and
C. C. Garvin Professor of Geochemistry
Virginia Tech
Blacksburg, VA 24061

RE: DUSEL

Dear Bob:

I would like to take this opportunity to express, on behalf of The Blacksburg Partnership, our support for the proposal that you are preparing for the Deep Underground Science and Engineering Lab (DUSEL), to be constructed in Giles County.

The 25 members of the Blacksburg Partnership, made up of executives from Virginia Tech, the Town of Blacksburg, and local business communities, recognize the tremendous economic benefit a facility such as this would bring to our area. As such, we are 100% behind this project and will lend any support necessary to help secure its location in our area.

Please feel free to contact me at any time if you need additional support materials for this recommendation. We look forward to working with you as we proceed on a successful path to construction of the DUSEL in our area.

Sincerely,

William Aden
President
February 28, 2005

To Whom It May Concern:

Giles Rural Development Alliance (Giles RDA) is a non-profit community group located in Giles County (Newport) Virginia. Giles RDA’s goals are to:

- Promote responsible development in Giles County,
- Engage in efforts designed to preserve and protect the rural character of Giles County,
- Sponsor educational workshops and seminars for county officials and interested citizens,
- Preserve and protect the natural resources of the area through funded research, and,
- Support co-existence of traditional farms with low density residential lands.

Giles RDA has engaged in a number of activities to support our stated goals. For example, we have collaborated with other local organizations to provide county officials with grant-funded educational workshops. Giles RDA has funded research detailing the effects of development on sensitive karst areas of Giles County, and we continue to research and provide information to citizens and county officials to support growth and development in an educated manner.

In the past few years, we have organized and hosted a number of community-based events, including some in which diverse opinions on local development issues were solicited. These open community forums allow citizens to voice concerns in a neutral environment, and in some cases, afford organizations involved in a development effort an opportunity to present their perspective, and propose solutions to community concerns.

Giles RDA President Steve Craig and I have spoken with Virginia Tech’s DUSEL Executive Committee Chair, Robert J. Bodnar, UDP and DUSEL Project Director, Bruce Vogelaar regarding Virginia Tech’s NSF DUSEL proposal. From our discussions, we feel that our experience facilitating Giles county community meetings provides an opportunity for the DUSEL team to not only solicit local community opinions on the project, but also provide feedback to the community in terms of economic benefits, advancements in science, development and construction plans, mitigation strategies, and so on. This opportunity will enable the VT DUSEL team to maintain an ongoing dialogue between their project efforts and Giles County citizens; a dialogue that we feel is critical to the long term viability and success of the project.

As a result, we are submitting this “letter of interest” to convey our interest in participating in the project.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me directly at 540-544-7594.

Sincerely,

Joe Gabbard, Treasurer