March 27, 2015

The Honorable Rob Bishop
Committee on Natural Resources
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Re: National Geological and Geophysical Data Preservation Program (NGGDPP) Reauthorization

Dear Chairman Bishop:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we ask for your support in the reauthorization of the National Geological and Geophysical Data Preservation Program (NGGDPP).

Archived and heritage geological and geophysical data can yield energy and mineral discoveries worth billions of dollars and generate tens of thousands of jobs. The NGGDPP supports important Federal-State partnerships that achieve mutually beneficial goals related to the rescue and accessibility of invaluable geoscience data.

Geoscience data are critical and of immediate concern to the Nation's economy, well-being, and security. Examples include the following:

- Location, abundance, sustainability, and quality of water supplies
- Domestic energy sources, such as oil, gas, coal, geothermal, and renewables; reduction of carbon emissions
- Domestic sources of metals and critical minerals
- Identification, mapping, and prediction of geologic hazards such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, sinkholes and landslides
- New technological breakthroughs require re-examination of samples and data; data historically deemed insignificant may become paramount to new discoveries
- Training the next generation of geoscientists, especially geologic mappers

All of these issues rely on the analysis of geological and geophysical samples, collections, and data that already exist. **They have been acquired at the cost of hundreds of millions of dollars and in most instances are irreplaceable.** Regrettably, these vital materials are often in poor states of preservation and access, and in danger of permanent loss. Many of this nation's geological data repositories, most of which are maintained by State Geological Surveys, are now at or near their storage capacity. Some have exceeded their capacity and are relying on temporary, non-climate-controlled portable storage. Expansion of these facilities requires significant capital costs. While industry and government have made substantial investments to acquire geoscience data and collections for over 150 years, volumes of expensive and arduously

obtained subsurface information are currently at risk of disposal or ruin. Once these data are lost, they probably will never be replaced.

Congress established the National Geological and Geophysical Data Preservation Program (NGGDPP) through the Energy Policy Act of 2005 [PL 109-38] to address these issues. We acknowledge and support the role of the US Geological Survey (USGS) in administering this program, which includes the development and compilation of state and federal data inventories, data standards, creation of a National Digital Catalog, strategic planning, and collaboration regarding preservation techniques. This vital work can continue, however, it requires Congressional reauthorization.

We commend your efforts to strengthen our nation's capacity to address the challenges associated with energy, as well as critical and strategic mineral resources. The reauthorization of the NGGDPP will greatly assist in these endeavors.

Please contact Dr. Jonathan D. Arthur, President of the Association of American State Geologists at Jonathan.Arthur@dep.state.fl.us or 850.591.5174 if you have questions or would like additional information regarding the NGGDPP. Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,

Association of American State Geologists (AASG)
American Geosciences Institute
Society for Mining, Metallurgy, and Exploration, Inc.
National Ground Water Association
American Association of Petroleum Geologists
American Meteorological Society
Geological Society of America
American Geophysical Union
Association of Environmental & Engineering Geologists
Soil Science Society of America
Arizona Rock Products Association
Arizona Geological Society
Endless Mountain Energy Partners, LLC
Pennsylvania Aggregates and Concrete Association
Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences, Lehigh University
Marcellus Shale Coalition

Carmeuse Group
Illinois Association of Aggregate Producers
Industrial Minerals Resource Consultants, Inc.
Exxon-Mobil
Cabot Oil and Gas
Chesapeake Energy Corporation
Cimarex Energy Company
Dolan Integration Group (DIG)
Frazer and Company Exploration Services
ECSI, LLC
Magnum Hunter Production, Inc.
Western Kentucky University Department of Geography and Geology
Indiana University Shale Research Lab
University of Kentucky, Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences
Geological Society of Kentucky
Midas Gold Corporation
Geological Society of Connecticut
Southern Company Services
Alabama Geological Society
Alabama Museum of Natural History
McWane Science Center
F.M. Beck, Inc
New York State Construction Materials Association
Independent Oil & Gas Association of New York
Geological Survey of Alabama
Alaska Division of Geological & Geophysical Surveys
Arizona Geological Survey
Arkansas Geological Survey
California Geological Survey
Colorado Geological Survey
Connecticut Geological Survey
Delaware Geological Survey
Florida Geological Survey
Idaho Geological Survey

Illinois State Geological Survey
Indiana Geological Survey
Iowa Geological Survey
Kansas Geological Survey
Kentucky Geological Survey
Louisiana Geological Survey
Maine Geological Survey
Maryland Geological Survey
Massachusetts Geological Survey
Michigan Geological Survey
Minnesota Geological Survey
Mississippi Office of Geology
Missouri Geological Survey
Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology
Nebraska Geological Survey
Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology
New Hampshire Geological Survey
New Jersey Geological and Water Survey
New Mexico Bureau of Geology & Mineral Resources
New York Geological Survey
North Carolina Geological Survey
North Dakota Geological Survey
Ohio Geological Survey
Oklahoma Geological Survey
Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries
Pennsylvania Bureau of Topographic and Geologic Survey
Rhode Island Geological Survey
South Carolina Geological Survey
South Dakota Geological Survey Program
Tennessee Geological Survey
Texas Bureau of Economic Geology
Utah Geological Survey
Vermont Geological Survey
Virginia Division of Geology and Mineral Resources

Washington Division of Geology and Earth Resources
West Virginia Geological Survey
Wisconsin Geological & Natural History Survey
Wyoming State Geological Survey