



# NATIONAL RADIO ASTRONOMY OBSERVATORY

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June 19, 1989

The Honorable Robert C. Byrd  
Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Byrd:

I am taking the liberty of speaking on behalf of several groups: the scientific community, the staff of the National Radio Astronomy Observatory in Green Bank, and NRAO's neighbors in Pocahontas County and the rest of West Virginia. Our message is one of thanks, expressed as emphatically as we can state it, for your help in securing funding for a new radio telescope.

You have turned the despair that inevitably accompanied last November's collapse of the 300-foot telescope into optimism based on the certainty of its replacement. Seldom is any laboratory offered the opportunity to make as significant an advance as the one you have enabled us to make. We commit ourselves to utilizing this opportunity to seize international leadership in our discipline, a position we shall endeavor to maintain well into the next century.

The scientific community had keenly felt the loss of capability that occurred when the 300-foot telescope collapsed. Its members strongly supported NRAO's quest for a replacement. Because the full funding has been provided in a way that leaves the National Science Foundation's long term plan uninterrupted, our fellow scientists are especially grateful to you.

Finally, I wish to inform you how pleased we at the Observatory are by the solid support we have enjoyed from West Virginians. Little did we realize how meaningful our research, education, and tourism functions were to our closest neighbors, until in our time of direst need they responded with their help. No reward we could give them will equal the one you have enabled by assuring our scientific vitality for decades to come.

The new Green Bank Telescope will be one you will be proud of.

Sincerely yours,

George A. Seielstad  
Assistant Director for  
Green Bank Operations

GAS/ss

NRAO Employees Joining Dr. Seielstad

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