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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6025

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July 6, 1989

Mr. Paul A. Vanden Bout
Director
National Radio Astronomy Observatory
Edgemont Road
Charlottesville, Virginia 22903-2475

Dear Mr. Vanden Bout:

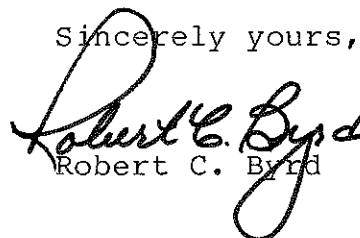
Thank you for your recent letter expressing your kind words regarding my efforts and those of my staff to include funding in the Fiscal Year 1989 Dire Emergency Supplemental Appropriations bill for the replacement of the 300-foot National Radio Astronomy Telescope which collapsed last November due to metal fatigue. I appreciate your taking the time to write as you have.

The collapse of the 300-foot radio telescope at Green Bank is a significant loss to West Virginia and the scientific community. Last November's calamity has left the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the Nation's radio astronomers without one of its most valuable measuring instruments. The Green Bank telescope has significantly advanced the state of modern astronomy over the last quarter century. Because of the acute loss created by the collapse of the telescope, it is imperative that reconstruction of the replacement instrument begin as soon as possible.

Due to differences in the House- and Senate-passed versions of the supplemental appropriations bill, a joint House-Senate conference met to reconcile the differences. On June 22, the Senate approved a compromise bill for the rest of Fiscal Year 1989. As part of the compromise, half of the \$75 million needed to rebuild the telescope has been delayed until next year. The House agreed on the compromise measure, and the bill was signed into law on June 30.

With kind regards, I am

Sincerely yours,


Robert C. Byrd

RCB:lh