

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 28, 2017

Ms. Elizabeth Pentecost, RE: Green Bank Observatory
Division of Astronomical Sciences
Room W9152
2415 Eisenhower Avenue
Alexandria, VA 22314

Ms. Pentecost,

I am sorry I am unable join what I am sure is a very crowded room to discuss the National Science Foundation's Draft Environmental Impact Study for the Green Bank Observatory.

If there is a word to describe the draft EIS, I would use the word 'exhaustive.' I commend those who took the time and effort to compile this report. Though I am not able to attend this meeting, if they are like previous ones held to discuss the future of Green Bank, I know that there are first responders standing next to researchers, and school children sitting near their teachers, along with current small business owners and maybe more than a few future scientists. This represents the impact, and the opportunity, that Green Bank represents.

When I submitted a letter in November of 2016, I asked NSF to not overlook the less easily measured impacts, which among the soil and climate impact, hit home to me as I read through your report. We have talked about how Green Bank is the potential portal for history-making research. But let's not overlook that the GBO is the certified Red Cross Shelter for this area, that the water tower is used by several fire stations, and that the GBO staff, in addition to their daily work, serve as the backbone to this area through their work in community organizations and emergency service crews. In addition to monitoring potential life in the solar system, these men and women are improving life for those in Pocahontas County.

I have long advocated the partnership model for Green Bank. In this time of limited financial resources from the federal government, maximizing partnerships- whether with universities, other government agencies, or private industry is something we should always be pursuing. I have been and will continue to be an advocate for the potential that exists at Green Bank. That potential rests in its facilities, its community, and in the men and women who work there. Let's work to fulfill that potential, for it holds exciting promise for all of us.

Sincerely,



Shelley Moore Capito

United States Senator

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