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Dr. James D. Miller, Jr.
Senior Scientist/Adjunct Professor
Minnesota Geological Survey
c/o Natural Resources Research Institute
University of Minnesota Duluth
5013 Miller Trunk Hwy
Duluth, MN 55811

**Re. Letter of Support: Precambrian Research Centre -
University of Minnesota Duluth**

Dear Dr. Miller:

I have reviewed your proposal for a new Precambrian Research Centre as outlined in the PRC flyer that you sent me a couple of weeks ago. I am pleased to provide this letter of support and hope that the agencies that are assessing your proposal will take time to consider my comments.

Firstly, let me congratulate you and your colleagues for getting the proposal to this stage. As outlined in your rationale in the full proposal, there is a definite gap in the education being provided to geoscientists at colleges and universities in North America. In my 20+ years as a government geologist, exploration geologist and academic geoscientist, I have witnessed the steady decline in field training capacity amongst our leading North American geoscience departments. This has translated into a general decline in professional standards in core technical abilities (field skills) in graduates, despite the perception of "technical sophistication". The expertise in basic field mapping resident in our academic institutions

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has been in a steady "death spiral" for 20 years. This decline is clearly self-perpetuating - once lost, the training capacity is not easily reconstructed. Experienced field-based geoscientists are an increasingly rare and highly valued breed. This circumstance overlaps with a current global supply gap for experienced geoscientists in academe, government and industry. As an explorer, the paucity of experienced field geologists is a very serious problem facing the minerals industry and one that cannot be remedied by "black box" technologies. There never has and, likely, never will be a substitute for excellent observational skills in the geoscience disciplines.

The 1990-2002 decline in enrolments in the few remaining North American geoscience departments that deliver a "conventional" geological education has begun to reverse itself. Concurrently, metal markets have heated up and there appears to be growing support for a long-lived, sustainable recovery in the minerals sector. Getting back to your proposal, the timing is therefore ideal to get the PRC initiative up and running. Within our exploration group, I have been pushing for an internal field training program for the past 2 years. This suggestion was met with general support from local management. This reflects how desperate we in the mining industry are to develop young exploration geoscientists with solid, field-based mapping and interpretative skills. The reality of the situation is that we have neither the time nor resources to launch such a program. Accordingly, I was extremely pleased to see your proposal and would like to formally express my strong support. Many of my senior colleagues at Anglo American Exploration (Canada) Ltd. and Anglo American Exploration U.S. Inc. are also in support.

I am prepared to discuss the provision of financial support with local management. I note that you may be seeking industry funding through membership fees. This is a sensible approach. Please send more details if you are successful in obtaining State/Federal funding. I would definitely seriously consider having some of our new recruits participate in your program. I am also prepared to assist your team in developing appropriate, field-based, exploration-focused mapping "schools" that emphasize mafic-ultramafic systems and nickel-copper-PGE deposits. As we discussed previously, there are numerous opportunities to

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expand the PRC into key belts in SE Manitoba and NW Ontario.

Please advise if you require more detailed comments. I am more than pleased to discuss the proposal with the reviewers at their convenience.

Best of Luck!

Regards,

Dave Peck

***P.S.** Note that the comments contained herein reflect my own opinions and not necessarily those of Anglo American plc or its affiliates and subsidiaries.*

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