

NATIONAL STONE, SAND & GRAVEL ASSOCIATION



*Natural building blocks for quality of life*  
April 9, 2007

The Honorable Larry Craig  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Craig:

The members of the National Stone, Sand and Gravel Association (NSSGA) recognize that the earth's resources, upon which all life depends, are finite, and that wise stewardship is necessary today to preserve American's quality of life for future generations. The US Geological Survey, through the National Cooperative Geologic Mapping Program (NCGMP) established in 1992, has partnered with states and universities to provide modern geologic maps to federal agencies, states, and communities to facilitate sound land-use policies. For this reason, NSSGA is pleased to endorse the National Geologic Mapping Reauthorization Act (S. 240).

The NCGMP is divided into three parts, FedMap, StateMap, and EdMap. The first two components aid the understanding of groundwater regimes, mineral resources, geologic hazards such as landslides and earthquakes, and geology essential for all types of land use planning; as well as providing basic scientific data. The third component, EdMap, supports development of academic programs that teach earth science students the fundamental principles of geologic mapping and field analysis.

Aggregates are basic materials essential to our built environment and the future needs for stone, sand and gravel are expected to increase significantly. In a number of areas aggregate accessibility is becoming a problem, forcing localities to import the aggregates necessary to sustain the economic vitality of the local community. As the federal, state and local governments plan for future growth, ensuring access to a secure aggregate supply becomes even more crucial. Recent reports from Florida and California indicate a looming aggregate shortage if current sources are not protected and new deposits identified and permitted. The maps provided by the NCGMP are instrumental to this effort.

As the largest mining association by product volume in the world, NSSGA's member companies produce 90 percent of the crushed stone and more than 70 percent of the sand and gravel consumed annually in the U.S. Aggregates are the largest component of asphalt and concrete. More than 3 billion tons of aggregates were produced in 2006 at a value of approximately \$21 billion, contributing nearly \$40 billion annually to the GDP of the United States and each year it increases. Without these important natural products, the nation's infrastructure could not be built or maintained, and commerce and quality of life would be severely reduced. With over 11,000 operations nationwide and a workforce of more than 117,000 men and women, most Congressional Districts are home to multiple aggregate operations.

NSSGA looks forward to working with you to reauthorize this important program.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Joy Wilson  
President & CEO

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