



City of Flagstaff

January 23, 2020

Senator Lisa Murkowski
522 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510

**RE: Flagstaff City Council support of legislation, S242 and HR401, the
"Lowell Observatory Conveyance Act"**

Dear Senator Lisa Murkowski:

The City of Flagstaff and Lowell Observatory have had a mutually beneficial and supportive relationship for over 125 years. The Observatory's long list of scientific discoveries is a source of great pride to the community, and the Observatory and its staff's engagement as members of the community are legend and ongoing.

Over the past century, the Observatory and Flagstaff have seen significant growth. For the Observatory, this has shown itself in increasing numbers of peer-reviewed publications and investments in cutting edge instrumentation and technology. It has also shown in the increasing numbers of visitors to Flagstaff who make the journey to Mars Hill to visit the historic grounds and look through the many telescopes available for public viewing. Lowell Observatory is the most popular tourist site in Flagstaff, with over 100,000 visitors per year. The combination of this growth in science and tourism has been of great benefit to the community in both economics and civic pride. The Observatory is investing even more to improve its capacity for science and outreach with the campaign for the new \$29 million, Marley Foundation Astronomy Discovery Center, which is slated to open in 2023. This is in addition to the \$4.4M Giovale Open Deck Observatory, which opened in October 2019 to rave reviews and is the finest public astronomical viewing facility in the world.

That growth is putting increasing strain on the one road that leads to the Observatory and is also an increasing safety concern for our emergency services personnel. Therefore, the Observatory has engaged with the community to help address this in ways that benefit the community as well as the Observatory. Any new access road will require building onto Section 17, west of the Observatory main campus. There are many ways in which this kind of an infrastructure investment can bring additional benefits to Flagstaff. In order to put together a plan for this, including gaining needed commitments from other entities, Lowell Observatory needs clear title to the land it has owned and been a steward of for the past century.

We ask that you support the legislation in question to help not only Lowell Observatory, but Flagstaff as well.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Coral J. Evans". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Coral J. Evans, MBA
Mayor of Flagstaff, Arizona

jh/CE

CC: Tom O'Halleran, Martha McSally, Krysten Sinema, Jeff Hall, W. Lowell Putnam,
Senator Joe Manchin, III, Rep. Raul Grijalva, Rep. Rob Bishop