



**BLACK HILLS**  
STATE UNIVERSITY

January 5, 2022

Lawrence County Commissioners  
90 Sherman Street  
Deadwood, SD 57732

Dear Lawrence County Commissioners,

I am writing this letter in full support of the Wharf mine expansion.

Since November 2017, I've served as Director of the SD CEO West Women's Business Center, hosted by the Black Hills State University Foundation and located in Spearfish, SD. Our mission is to help aspiring entrepreneurs launch new ventures, assist current business owners grow and create workforce development training programs, business workshops, networking opportunities and build leadership skills. We are partially grant funded by the U.S. Small Business Administration and employ 3.0 FTE.

Wharf has been a key sponsor of our Women in Leadership program for seven years which has graduated over 175 empowered women in the Northern Hills and Rapid City area. These women have received training in conflict resolution, project management, communication, financial planning, and many other business-related topics. While building their professional leadership skills, they have gone on to build businesses, receive promotions and have the confidence to seek new positions in both their career and in community leadership roles. We could not have built, improved and grown this program without Wharf's consistent support.

Continued operation of Wharf is important to SD CEO West as they have not only helped us build and sustain our Leadership program, Wharf has also consistently supported our events and workshops through sponsorships, booth exhibitors and providing speakers and presenter. It's really an example of a successful business and community non-profit partnership where we are more efficient working together.

We are excited about this opportunity for Wharf to grow and continue to positively impact women in business across the Northern Hills and the SD CEO West Women's Business Center.

Please contact me at (605) 642-6311 or [michelle.kane@bhsu.edu](mailto:michelle.kane@bhsu.edu) with any questions.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:  
*Michelle Kane*  
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Michelle Kane  
Director, SD CEO West Women's Business Center

**SD CEO West | Women's Business Center**  
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