May 5, 2022

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D.C.  20500

Dear Mr. President,

I represent MAPPS, an association of geospatial professional companies. As you contemplate nominees to be Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), we urge you to select a person who understands geospatial technology or geographic information. Geographic information informs and is informed by the social sciences, mathematics, engineering, economics, computer science, public health, and many other fields.

Geospatial data analysis is crucial to policymaking and many federal agency uses GIS technology to help guide decision-making; allowing a common frame of reference to evaluate options, develop policy, and communicate with the public.

Following the tornadoes in Kentucky, you received a briefing from Secretary Mayorkas and his staff that included the co-chair of the OSTP National Science and Technology Council’s Subcommittee on Resilience Science & Technology focusing on the critical importance of geospatial data and technology for the disaster response and recovery.

You also recently issued Presidential Determination No. 2022-11, ensuring a robust, resilient, sustainable, and environmentally responsible domestic industrial base meets the requirements of the clean energy economy, such as the production of large-capacity batteries, essential to our national security and preservation of domestic critical infrastructure. Understanding what minerals exist and where is fundamental to reaching this goal. Geospatial data (mapping) across the U.S. tells us what is available to mine and where.

We appreciate your consideration of this recommendation and would be happy to discuss our ideas further with you or your staff. Thank you for the important work you are doing on behalf of the country. Please do not hesitate to let us know if we can lend our assistance or support.

Sincerely,

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Robert Hanson, President - MAPPS