

Minister of Finance

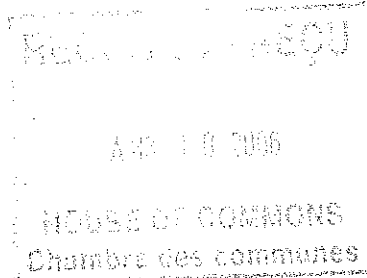


Ministre des Finances

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0G5

2006FIN190025

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Mr. John D. Maloney, M.P.
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Dear Mr. Maloney:

Thank you for your correspondence of June 8, 2006, regarding the Canadian Astronomical Society and funding for the Long Range Plan (LRP) for astronomy and astrophysics. Please excuse the delay in replying.

I appreciated the opportunity to learn about the impressive accomplishments of Canada's astronomy research community. I have also taken note of your request that the Government of Canada continue its support for the LRP.

As you indicated in your correspondence, the Government of Canada has already invested substantially in advancing the LRP, providing a total of over \$100 million since 2001 to projects that were identified as priorities by the astronomy and astrophysics research community.

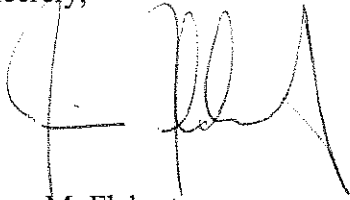
More broadly, our new Government recognizes the contribution of scientific research and technological development to building a more productive and competitive Canadian economy. The 2006 budget included measures to increase federal support for post-secondary research by \$100 million per year. In particular, the budget increased funding for the granting councils by a combined \$40 million per year, including an additional \$17 million annually for the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC). This brings NSERC's annual base budget to about \$740 million, more than \$300 million higher per annum than in 1997-98. Astronomy researchers have been among the beneficiaries of this increased funding.

The 2006 budget also indicated that the Honourable Maxime Bernier, Minister of Industry and I will collaborate over the next year on a science and technology strategy that will encompass the broad range of government support for research. The strategy will guide future government decisions regarding science and technology issues, including the participation in major international astronomy projects. I am therefore sending a copy of your correspondence to Minister Bernier for his information.

Canada

Thank you for communicating your concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. M. Flaherty', written in a cursive style.

James M. Flaherty

c.c.: The Honourable Maxime Bernier, P.C., M.P.