

Minerals Make Policy

As the United States faces a growing reliance on mineral imports, members of Congress have introduced legislation that would better employ our nation's own mineral resources while supporting American innovation, manufacturing, economic growth and national security.

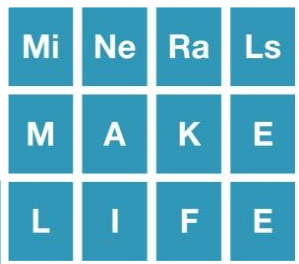
Smart Minerals Legislation

A lengthy, outdated and uncertain permitting process has deterred investment and inhibited growth in U.S. minerals mining for decades. In July 2012, legislation addressing these obstacles—Rep. Mark Amodei's "National Strategic and Critical Minerals Production Act" (H.R. 4402)—passed the U.S. House of Representatives with bipartisan support. Now facing the Senate, this act could see the United States produce more of the minerals vital to our economy and security through the following provisions:

- **Including domestic mines that provide strategic and critical minerals within the scope of "infrastructure projects" as described in Executive Order 13604**, which mandates reduced review and permitting timeframes for infrastructure projects;
- **Ensuring permitting efficiency by defining the responsibilities of the lead permitting agency.** Lead agency responsibilities include establishing binding timeframes, coordinating with other agencies, relying on existing data, establishing any required financial assurance, and allowing case-by-case adoption of the functional equivalence doctrine in lieu of separate National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analyses;
- **Addressing the bureaucracy in the Department of the Interior's Federal Register review process** for NEPA notices by delegating the processing of NEPA notices to state offices; and
- **Reducing delays posed by litigation over permitting decisions** by requiring challenges to be filed within 60 days of the final agency action.

Minerals Support Growth and Security

- Despite **\$6.2 trillion^{i,ii}** worth of key minerals within our borders, the United States currently imports **\$6.9 billionⁱⁱⁱ** worth of mineral raw materials from foreign countries.
- Producing to our resource potential for just three minerals—copper, molybdenum and iron ore—would have resulted in an additional **\$32 billion** in U.S. revenue last year.
- Major U.S. industries used mineral materials to manufacture final products such as cars and houses, making up about **15 percent**—more than **\$2 trillionⁱⁱⁱ**—of the 2011 GDPⁱⁱⁱ.
- The U.S. military uses **three-quarters of a million** tons of minerals each year^{iv} to protect our nation and keep our troops well equipped with technology ranging from advanced jet engines to night vision equipment.



Sources:

ⁱ U.S. Geological Survey

ⁱⁱ U.S. Department of Defense

ⁱⁱⁱ U.S. Geological Survey, *Mineral Commodity Summaries 2012*

^{iv} U.S. Department of Defense, *Reconfiguration of the National Defense Stockpile Report to Congress*