



Committee on Natural Resources U.S. House of Representatives

Chairman Doc Hastings

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Natural Resources Committee Approves Three Bills to Help Develop Rare Earth and Critical Materials in U.S.

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, the House Natural Resources Committee approved three bills with bipartisan support that will create jobs, streamline government red-tape, and make America less dependent on foreign critical and strategic minerals.

Critical and strategic minerals are vital to our everyday lives and are essential components of renewable energy, national defense equipment, medical devices, electronics, and common household items. Unfortunately, the U.S. relies on foreign sources for a majority of our non-fuel mineral materials and is 100 percent dependent on foreign sources of rare earth minerals. These three bills would remove government hurdles and regulations that delay and block development of our critical and strategic minerals.

[H.R. 687](#), “*Southeast Arizona Land Exchange and Conservation Act*,” sponsored by Rep. Paul Gosar (AZ-04), was approved by a 23-19 vote. This bipartisan bill authorizes a land exchange to open up the largest copper mine in North America and protect environmentally sensitive land. The legislation would create nearly 3,700 jobs, provide billions in tax revenue, generate over \$60 billion in economic activity, and strengthen our national security by developing our own U.S. copper resources. [Click here](#) to learn more.

“This land exchange and conservation bill is the direct result of years of negotiations, an open process and a common vision amongst its supporters to bring good paying jobs to Arizona,” said Rep. Paul Gosar. “I am very proud to have shepherded a final product that balances conservation and getting our economy growing again.”

[H.R. 761](#), “*National Strategic and Critical Minerals Production Act of 2013*,” sponsored by Rep. Mark Amodei (NM-02), was approved by a 24-17 vote. This bipartisan bill allows the U.S. to more efficiently develop our Nation's strategic and critical minerals. The bill streamlines the permitting process for mineral development by coordinating the actions of federal agencies and defines critical and strategic minerals.

“In the 2012 ranking of countries for mining investment, the United States ranked last in permitting delays,” said Rep. Mark Amodei. “Duplicative regulations, bureaucratic inefficiency, and lack of coordination between federal agencies are threatening the economic recovery of my home state and jeopardizing our national security. Nevada, which is rich in

strategic and critical minerals, also has the highest unemployment rate in the nation. Decade-long permitting delays are standing in the way of high-paying jobs and revenue for local communities. This bill would streamline the permitting process to leverage our nation's vast mineral resources, while paying due respect to economic and environmental concerns."

[H.R. 1063](#), "*National Strategic and Critical Minerals Policy Act of 2013*," sponsored by Rep. Doug Lamborn (CO-05), passed by unanimous consent. This bill addresses the lack of a coherent national policy to assure domestic availability of minerals essential for national economic well-being, national security, and global economic competitiveness.

"Though at least 40 percent of the world's rare earth reserves are located within the borders of the U.S. and its ally nations, our country now depends on imports from China for nearly 100 percent of its rare earth needs. We should not continue to ship American jobs overseas. This is unacceptable," said Rep. Doug Lamborn. "H.R. 1063 is the first step in reversing the trend of import mineral dependence and will create American jobs, and energy independence."

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