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CONTACT:
[Spencer Pederson](#) or [Jill Strait](#)
202-226-9019

Subcommittee Hears Testimony on Importance of Increased Mining and Mineral Production for Job Creation, Economic Growth

WASHINGTON D.C. – Today, the Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources held an [oversight hearing](#) on “*America’s Mineral Resources: Creating Mining and Manufacturing Jobs and Securing America*,” combined with a legislative hearing on seven mining bills that will create jobs, streamline government red-tape, and make America less dependent on foreign critical and strategic minerals. The subcommittee heard testimony from a number of witnesses who reiterated the importance of the mining industry to American job creation and economic growth.

“Strategic and critical minerals are essential to our economy, livelihood and national security. Renewable energy, national defense equipment, agriculture, healthcare and everyday items such as televisions, telephones, computers and light bulbs are all dependent on minerals,” said Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources Chairman Lamborn. “Domestic mining faces many challenges in the U.S., permitting and access being only a sliver of the numerous challenges facing mine development. However, it also holds great promise as we will hear from folks who see a bright future and opportunity. Harvesting domestic mineral resources contributes to local economies, and to the nation’s overall economic security from the most basic level up.”

“H.R.687 facilitates a land exchange that will bring into federal stewardship 5,500 acres of high-priority conservation lands that contain endangered species, sensitive ecosystems, recreational sites, and historic landmarks, in exchange for 2,600 acres of federal land in Pinal County, Arizona containing one of the largest undeveloped copper resources in the world,” said Rep. Paul Gosar (AZ-04). “This land exchange provides the framework for much needed high-wage jobs and has overwhelming support throughout the state. I look forward to bringing this bill back to the floor of the House and seeing the President sign it.”

“In the 2012 ranking of countries for mining investment, the United States ranked last in permitting delays,” said Rep. Mark Amodei (NV-02). “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. 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."

*"I was pleased to hear Acting Deputy Director Jamie Connell's testimony and have the opportunity to ask her some questions on my bill at today's hearing. H.R. 767 brings North Dakota's Bureau of Land Management [BLM] field office into BLM's Federal Permit Streamlining Pilot Project, which provides more efficient resources to handle the significant increase in applications for permits to drill [APDs]. APDs in North Dakota have gone from 147 in fiscal year 2009 to 701 in fiscal year 2012, nearly a 400% increase," **said Rep. Kevin Cramer (ND-At Large)**. "It's important to have North Dakota in this Pilot Project to compare and contrast it with the permitting process happening on state and private lands in North Dakota."*

*"Setting the soda ash royalty rate at a reasonable level is good for U.S. global competitiveness, will help to grow jobs, and will continue to bolster the U.S. economy," **said Rep. Cynthia Lummis (WY-At Large)**. "It's a logical step we can take to advance a success story in manufacturing, an area that has been desperate for success stories these last few years. This past Congress a bipartisan majority of the House Resources Committee agreed and I'm confident moving forward, that we'll see the same support this Congress."*

Mining and mineral resources bills discussed at today's hearing:

- [H.R. 1063](#) (Lamborn), "National Strategic and Critical Minerals Policy Act of 2013"
- [H.R. 687](#) (Gosar/Kirkpatrick), "Southeast Arizona Land Exchange and Conservation Act of 2013"
- [H.R. 697](#) (Heck), "Three Kids Mine Remediation and Reclamation Act"
- [H.R. 761](#) (Amodei), "Critical and Strategic Minerals Production Act"
- [H.R. 767](#) (Cramer), To amend the Energy Policy Act of 2005 to modify the Pilot Project offices of the Federal Permit Streamlining Pilot Project.
- [H.R. 957](#) (Lummis), "American Soda Ash Competitiveness Act"
- [H.R. 981](#) (Johnson of GA and Markey), "Resource Assessment of Rare Earths Act of 2013"

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