



Committee on Natural Resources U.S. House of Representatives

Chairman Doc Hastings

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House Approves Job-Creating Strategic & Critical Minerals Bill *Would Grow America's Economy & Strengthen National Security*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 761, the *National Strategic and Critical Minerals Production Act* by a bipartisan vote of 246-178. This legislation, sponsored by Rep. Mark Amodei (NV-02), would allow the United States to more efficiently develop America's strategic and critical minerals, such as rare earth elements, that are vital to job creation, American economic competitiveness and national security. To learn more about H.R. 761, click [here](#).

"President Obama routinely talks about wanting to create American jobs but his Administration continues to stand in the way of job creation with excessive red-tape and regulation, especially when it comes to mining strategic and critical minerals in America. Right now, it can take up to 10 years for the federal government to issue permits to mine these minerals that are vital to America's manufacturing sector. This is unacceptable and forces the U.S. to rely almost entirely on countries like China for these minerals," said Natural Resources Committee Chairman Doc Hastings (WA-04). "The National Strategic and Critical Minerals Production Act would streamline this excessive government red-tape by setting the total review process for permits at 30 months and ensuring that these important projects aren't held up by frivolous lawsuits. This legislation gives the opportunity for American manufacturers, small businesses, technology companies, and construction firms to create American jobs and use American resources to help make the products that are essential to our everyday lives."

"In the 2012 ranking of countries for mining investment, the United States ranked last in permitting delays. Duplicative regulations, bureaucratic inefficiency, and lack of coordination between federal agencies unnecessarily threaten the economic recovery of my home state and jeopardizing our national security," said Rep. Mark Amodei (NV-02). "Nevada, which is rich in strategic and critical minerals, also has the highest unemployment rate in the nation. Decade-long permitting delays stand in the way of high-paying jobs and revenue for local communities. This bill would not change environmental regulations or public input. It would streamline the permitting process to leverage our nation's vast mineral resources, while paying due respect to economic, national security, and environmental concerns."

Specifically, The *National Strategic and Critical Minerals Production Act*:

- Requires the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture to more efficiently develop domestic sources of strategic and critical minerals and mineral materials; including rare earth elements.
- Defines strategic and critical minerals as those that are necessary:
 - For national defense and national security requirements;
 - For the Nation's energy infrastructure including pipelines, refining capacity, electrical power generation and transmission, and renewable energy production;
 - To support domestic manufacturing, agriculture, housing, telecommunications, healthcare and transportation infrastructure; or
 - For the Nation's economic security and balance of trade.
- Facilitates a timely permitting process for mineral exploration projects by clearly defining the responsibilities of a lead agency.
- Sets the total review process for issuing permits to 30 months.
- Ensures American mining projects are not indefinitely delayed by frivolous lawsuits by setting reasonable time limits for litigation.
- Sets a 60 day time limit to file a legal challenge to a mining project, gives standing to project proponents, and limits injunctive relief to what is necessary to correct the violation of a legal requirement, and prohibits the payment of attorney's fees, expenses and other costs by the U.S. taxpayer.
- Respects and upholds all environmental laws while setting timelines that ensure these laws do not become tools for lawsuits or bureaucrats to block or delay responsible projects.

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