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Committee Unanimously Approves Bill to Strengthen and Advance National Minerals Policy

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, the House Natural Resources Committee unanimously approved by voice vote [H.R. 2011](#), the “*National Strategic and Critical Minerals Policy Act of 2011*.” As part of House Republicans’ American Energy Initiative, this bill aims to improve our American mineral policy by coordinating a government-wide survey of American mineral resources, demands and factors impacting mineral development, including workforce, permitting and regulations.

“Without increased domestic exploration, significant declines in U.S. mineral production are unavoidable as present reserves are exhausted. We will continue to ship American jobs overseas and forfeit our economic competitiveness unless we take steps to develop our own mineral resources,” said Subcommittee Chairman Lamborn. “H.R. 2011 is the first step in reversing this trend of import mineral dependence and will provide valuable information for policy makers charting a course to grow domestic production of mineral resources and expand our Nation’s manufacturing sector, and create private sector family wage jobs positively affecting our national and economic security.”

“Strategic and critical minerals are vital to our everyday lives. They are essential components of renewable energy, national defense equipment, medical devices, electronics, agricultural production and common household items. It is imperative that we identify the roadblocks to meeting our national minerals needs so that we can become less dependent on foreign supplies, increase our national security, and create more American jobs by securing our manufacturing industry and revitalizing our economy,” said Natural Resources Committee Chairman Doc Hastings (WA-04).

Background:

The *National Strategic and Critical Minerals Policy Act of 2011* will provide essential facts to help strengthen and improve our national mineral policy. Specifically, the bill:

- Directs the Secretary of the Interior to coordinate a government-wide inventory of the Nation’s mineral resources and availability to meet current and future strategic and critical mineral needs.
- Requires the Secretary of the Interior to evaluate factors impacting domestic

mineral development, including workforce, access, permitting and duplicative regulatory requirements as well as identify areas for improvement.

- Directs the Interior Department to assemble the report within six months.
- Requires an annual progress report, beginning one year after the date of enactment of the Act for the following two years, outlining the progress made in reaching the policy goals described in the bill.
- Requires assessment of domestic and international sources of rare earth elements.
- Includes guidance for the USGS' ongoing Global Mineral Assessment and National Mineral Assessment currently under development and scheduled to begin in 2013.

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