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May 2, 2025

U. S. House Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
U. S. House of Representatives

Dear Committee Members:

On behalf of the Ely Area Development Association and Up North Jobs Inc., I write to document the record and express our strong support of Section 80131, Superior National Forest Lands in Minnesota, of the House Natural Resources reconciliation package released this week. This area of northeast Minnesota contains the largest known undeveloped copper-nickel deposit in the world, in addition to significant helium deposits. Several companies in the region are pursuing responsible development of these resources that are vital to national security and bolstering domestic supply chains.

Both of the nonprofit organizations of which I serve as President and CEO, have long promoted job growth and economic development in Northeastern Minnesota. The Ely Area Development Association was first chartered in 1959 and was responsible for the development of numerous Ely projects. Up North Jobs is a 12-year-old membership organization with more than 4,000 company and individual members and supporters who financially support its activities and whom support the development of copper-nickel mining in the Rainy River Watershed of the Superior National Forest.

The aforementioned section included in the reconciliation package would have a positive impact on several companies pursuing projects in our region. The communities of Northeastern Minnesota stand to benefit from these projects and would make significant economic contributions and provide important job opportunities in Northeastern Minnesota, where the economy has been in decline for decades. Yet, sadly, the companies proposing to develop these projects have experienced decades of unnecessary setbacks and delays in the process.

The Department of the Interior's (DOI) cancellation of federal mineral rights and enactment of a mineral withdrawal in northeast Minnesota has been devastating to projects and the community members that want to see them move forward. These actions have created uncertainty for domestic mining and investment in Minnesota, putting projects in jeopardy.

Minnesota has the potential to become a mineral powerhouse for the U.S., with resources that will support generations of mining. Overturning the mineral withdrawal and restoring federal mineral rights in northeast Minnesota is a critical step in ensuring these opportunities can be

developed here in the U.S. It will not mean that mining or extraction will begin immediately, but rather it will give project proposers the opportunity to have their projects reviewed through the robust regulatory processes under state and federal agencies.

Therefore, the Ely Area Development Association, Up North Jobs, and its many members and supporters fully support Section 80131, Superior National Forest Lands in Minnesota, of the House Natural Resources reconciliation package since it would greatly benefit our region's companies, communities and the United States of America.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gerald M. Tyler", with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Gerald M. Tyler
Chairman, President and CEO