



American Exploration &
Mining Association
EST. 1895

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May 6, 2025

The Honorable Bruce Westerman
Chairman
House Natural Resources Committee
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jared Huffman
Ranking Member
House Natural Resources Committee
1329 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable John Pete Stauber
Chairman
House Natural Resources Subcommittee on
Energy and Mineral Resources
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Yassamin Ansari
Ranking Member
House Natural Resources Subcommittee on
Energy and Mineral Resources
1329 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Re: May 6, 2025 House Natural Resources Committee Markup of Reconciliation Committee
Print

Dear Chairman Westerman, Ranking Member Huffman, Chairman Stauber and Ranking Member
Ansari,

The American Exploration & Mining Association (AEMA) wishes to express our support for the
Reconciliation Committee Print, under consideration today. This legislation will place the United
States on the path to a more secure mineral supply chain.

Who We Are and the Importance of the U.S. Minerals Mining Industry

AEMA is a 130-year-old, 1,800-member national trade association representing the mineral
development and mining industry, with members residing across 46 states, 7 Canadian provinces
or territories and 10 other countries. AEMA is the recognized national representative for
exploration, the junior mining sector, as well as mineral developers interested in maintaining
access to public lands. Thus, AEMA represents the entire mining life cycle, from exploration to
mineral extraction and then to reclamation and closure. More than 80 percent of our members are
small businesses or individuals working for small businesses.

American miners continue to play an indispensable role in building and defending our Nation. From foundations to roofs, power plants to wind farms, roads and bridges to communication grids and data storage centers, America's infrastructure begins and ends with minerals and mining.

There is no question that the minerals we produce are indispensable to modern society. They are also essential to fighting climate change, and for zero-emission technologies such as wind turbines, solar panels, storage batteries and EVs. As these technologies are deployed in ever-greater numbers, the demand for minerals is skyrocketing, and our Nation must do more to keep up.

Mineral demand continues to increase rapidly, year after year. Whether these minerals are required for renewable sources of energy, artificial intelligence (AI) or quantum computing, or weapons systems to bolster our national security, leaders around the world increasingly understand the importance of secure mineral supply chains. As countries around the world ramp up mineral consumption, the United States must recognize that unless we develop our own mineral endowment, we will be competing with more players for a disappearing pie.

This legislation will take several steps to address that quandary by reversing land management decisions such as the Superior National Forest withdrawal, and resource management plans for Rock Springs, Buffalo, Miles City and North Dakota, all of which removed federal land from mineral location and entry. We are also encouraged by the language to restore leases to companies seeking to develop projects in the Superior National Forest. Unlocking the Ambler Mining District by reinstating the 2020 Record of Decision authorizing an access road, which the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) requires, will allow Alaskans to responsibly develop deposits of copper, zinc, cobalt and many other minerals that are currently listed on the U.S. Geological Survey's critical minerals list.

In addition to these provisions, AEMA supports revisions to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) included in the bill, such as broader authority for project proponents to pay for and prepare NEPA documents such as environmental assessments (EAs) and environmental impact statements (EISs). Agencies overseeing the permitting and review processes will still retain ultimate decision-making authority, but these changes will allow the agencies to make the most efficient use of their workforce. The need to make such adaptations and adjustments faces our industry as well.

We look forward to continuing to work with you to ensure America has a secure and affordable supply of the minerals and metals needed for our modern society.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark D. Compton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mark" being the most prominent.

Mark Compton
Executive Director