

CRITICAL MINERALS LEGISLATION INCLUDED IN SENATE COVID-19 RECOVERY PACKAGE

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Today, members of the Western Caucus released the following statements after it was announced that the American Mineral Security Act would be included in the Senate COVID-19 relief package.

“Including the Murkowski/Manchin language addressing our critical mineral shortage in the next COVID response package will be a win for the American people and our national security. We currently rely on China for 20 critical minerals that are essential for our daily lives, that is no longer sustainable. China has lied to the world about COVID causing the death of more than a hundred thousand Americans, it hoarded PPE, looted America for access to PPE, and globally threatens to steal IP from American companies. We must act as a nation to secure ourselves and secure our supply chains to reduce our dependence on China, this bill accomplishes a step in that direction and we should enact it as soon as possible,” **said Congressional Western Caucus Chairman Paul Gosar (AZ-04).**

“The pandemic has reaffirmed the need to address our dangerous reliance on China and other nations for minerals that are essential to Americans’ health and economic and national security. Inclusion of the bipartisan American Mineral Security Act in the upcoming COVID relief package is a necessary and appropriate step forward in doing so,” **said Chairman Emeritus Rob Bishop (UT-01).**

“Our country must do more to reduce our dependence on countries like China, especially when it comes to rebuilding our domestic supply chains and mining of critical minerals Americans rely on. The inclusion of Senator Murkowski's bipartisan legislation in a COVID-19 relief package will foster economic development, enhance our country's energy independence, and strengthen our national security. This is a commonsense step forward for the United States,” **said Vice Chairman for Departments of Interior and Energy Dan Newhouse (WA-04).**

“COVID-19 has taught us a painful lesson: our country did not have the manufacturing capability or reliable domestic supply chains needed to rapidly react to such a severe public health crisis. Reducing our nation’s reliance on foreign-produced critical minerals, supply chains and pharmaceutical manufacturing will help greatly improve our preparedness to fight future pandemics and I welcome the inclusion of this important legislation that addresses some of these critical shortcomings,” **said Executive Vice Chairman Scott Tipton (CO-03).**

"Minerals are critical to items we utilize every day. Take a look around you: from your computer to your smartphone, to your kitchen appliances and your automobile; minerals are used to manufacture countless products used by you, me, and even those who oppose

mineral development right here in the United States. Our nation is being outpaced by adversaries, such as China and Russia, that have total disregard for our environment and basic human rights. Very frankly, the time for American mineral independence is long past due. The American Mineral Security Act is an important step toward achieving that goal, and I am pleased to see this bipartisan effort included in the Senate's COVID relief bill. I am grateful to Senator Murkowski for her long-time efforts on this issue, and I look forward to continuing to work with the rest of my colleagues on this important endeavor for American manufacturing competitiveness and global human rights," **said Vice Chairman for Indian Affairs and Fisheries Don Young (AK-AL).**

"There is no good reason for the United States to be relying on potential adversaries, like China, for our critical mineral 'rare earth' supplies. When we have known inventory, manpower, and production capabilities, we should be using our own resources to produce them, instead of relying on abusive labor and environmental practices in countries that may interrupt our supply at any moment. Senator Murkowski's commonsense bill, the American Mineral Security Act, will make sure that mineral production and processing happens right here in the United States. A domestic mineral supply chain is better for the environment, more cost-effective, and reinforces our national security," **said Vice Chairman for Agriculture and Chief Business Officer Doug LaMalfa (CA-01).**

"I am thankful Leader McConnell, Chairwoman Murkowski, and Ranking Member Manchin included the much-needed American Mineral Security Act in the Senate's COVID-19 relief package. We are far too reliant on foreign nations for many of our critical minerals that exist in abundance in Minnesota's Eighth and across the nation. Just last week, some extreme House Democrats sought to halt iron ore, aggregate, and precious metal permitting in my district. I will work to include the Senate language in the House version as well," **said Congressman Pete Stauber (MN-08).**

"It is good to see the bipartisan American Mineral Security Act is making progress in the Senate, including cosponsorships from Idaho Senators Crapo and Risch. In the current era of the COVID-19 pandemic, we've seen how important it is to support domestic mineral exploration, rather than relying on outside countries like China for our critical minerals," **said Congressman Russ Fulcher (ID-01).**

"One key lesson from this coronavirus is the importance of stable supply chains. Our nation's manufacturers must have secure, domestic sources of critical minerals for advanced technologies. These minerals, such as lithium and cobalt, are critical for many of the technologies we rely on each day. Yet our nation relies almost entirely on foreign producers. Improving domestic critical mineral production in the next COVID-19 response bill is a step towards restoring America's economic engine and protecting our leadership in emerging technologies," **said Congressman Michael C. Burgess, M.D. (TX-26).**

"I am thankful for Senator Murkowski's steadfast work to strengthen America's utilization of our abundant natural resources. Critical minerals are in products that we use every day, and will continue to be vital for our nation's sustainability and growth. Whether it's in our computers, cell phones, wind turbines, solar panels or cars, these minerals are essential. Unfortunately, they sometimes come from countries that don't have America's best interests in mind, nor do they have the labor or environmental standards that our country does. I thank Senator Murkowski and the bipartisan group of her colleagues in the Senate that believe in the security of our nation and the importance of American economic growth," **said Congressman Tom Emmer (MN-06).**

"I'm pleased to know the American Mineral Security Act is being included in the Senate COVID-19 relief bill. The COVID-19 pandemic has unfortunately highlighted vulnerabilities of the United States to foreign control of manufacturing and supply chains for a variety of products essential to our national security, healthcare, and natural resources. The inclusion of the American Mineral Security Act language will help mitigate those vulnerabilities and strengthen our independence and competitive edge," **said Congressman Jeff Duncan (SC-03).**

"If we are serious about helping the country recover from the economic impacts from COVID, we have to include the mining industry in that effort. 2020 has really showed us that we can't be dependent on foreign countries for our minerals, especially ones who are not

allies,” **said Congressman Chris Stewart (UT-02).**



“I strongly support Sen. Murkowski’s bipartisan legislation being included in the next coronavirus relief package. We’ve relied too heavily on other countries, especially China, to provide these minerals necessary for our nation’s defense. Streamlining the development of critical minerals here at home will increase our domestic production, create jobs, and strengthen our national security,” **said**

Congressman Paul Cook (CA-08).

Background

The American Mineral Security Act is a bipartisan bill sponsored by the Chair of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee Lisa Murkowski (R-AK). It is aimed at identifying critical minerals, reducing permitting delays, and promoting workforce development in order to create a dependable domestic supply chain for critical minerals.

The United States is currently reliant on countries like China and Russia to meet most of our mineral needs. The Congressional Western Caucus has consistently been the loudest voice in Congress about the need to secure our own domestic critical minerals supply chains.

The text of the legislation can be seen [HERE](#).