



American Critical Minerals Association

September 25, 2024

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Hakeem Jefferies
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leader Schumer, Speaker Johnson, Leader McConnell, and Leader Jefferies,

We write today to commend the inclusion key provisions supporting the US critical minerals sector in the FY2025 National Defense Authorization Act, as well as in the Committee-approved FY2025 Defense and Energy & Water Appropriations Acts currently before Congress. Building on the success of similar measures in FY2024, we are confident that these new provisions will make significant strides toward achieving our national goal of creating an independent and sustainable critical minerals supply chain.

The American Critical Minerals Association (ACMA) is an industry association that welcomes members from across the critical mineral supply chain, including raw material producers, processors, recyclers, suppliers, manufacturers, and end users, as well as academic institutions and industry allies. ACMA is particularly focused on advancing the domestic critical mineral processing and recycling sectors in a sustainable and responsible manner and for the benefit of our nation's economy and security.

The United States Geological Survey (USGS) reports that the US imported more than 50 percent of 49 mineral commodities in 2024, including 100 percent of our supply of 12 minerals.¹ Whether for batteries, defense applications, semiconductor fabrication, clean transportation or renewable energy, American industry is increasingly of our dependence on the People's Republic of China for our critical minerals supply. The US manufacturing sector seeks a secure and sustainable means of procuring certain materials in a manner that is free from the geopolitical agendas of foreign nations who do not share our values nor interests. ACMA believes that United States industrial, defense, and economic policy must keep pace with this goal.

We encourage Congress to continue to work with industry and other stakeholders to enact foundational policy supporting a robust critical minerals sector domestically and in partnership with our allies. Priority areas should include streamlined permitting reform, price support mechanisms, and providing reliable funding to support research and development into critical minerals production, processing, and recycling technologies. We applaud the inclusion of policies supporting the domestic critical minerals supply chain listed below.

FY25 National Defense Authorization Act & FY25 Defense Appropriations Act

- Establishing authority for multiyear procurement by the Department of Defense (DOD) for rare earth

¹ U.S. Geological Survey, 2024, Mineral commodity summaries 2024: U.S. Geological Survey, 212 p., <https://doi.org/10.3133/mcs2024>.

elements;

- Supporting the exploration and acquisition of new minerals to the National Defense Stockpile;
- Encouraging the Secretary of Defense to consider partnerships that support biological methods for extracting and processing critical minerals, including rare earth elements;
- Recognizing the importance of:
 - Addressing vulnerabilities associated with our domestic supply of graphite and whether partnerships in North America can reduce this vulnerability,
 - Sourcing minerals in innovative ways including the potential for exploration of and partnerships around responsible seabed mining and refining of polymetallic nodules,
 - Domestic partnerships and investments in studies focused on the use of biology to “develop scalable and economically viable” methods of extracting and processing rare earth elements and critical minerals, and
 - Supporting carbon nanotube technology to ensure DOD mission critical systems are leveraging predictable thermal interface solutions enabled with these technologies;
- Establishing a university-affiliated research center for critical minerals;
- Requiring the DOD to establish a strategy for its own critical minerals supply, prioritizing domestic production and processing to achieve independence from covered countries by 2035;
- Establishing policies and procedures to identify end-of-life (EOL) equipment that contains rare earth elements and/or other critical materials, as well as policies and procedures that would allow for their recovery and reuse;
- Encouraging further use of the Defense Production Act to grow domestic capabilities of critical materials necessary for defense requirements, especially niobium, tantalum, and scandium; and
- Recognizing the Defense Logistics Agency’s (DLA) prioritization of the domestic production of graphite
- Encouraging the DLA to explore opportunities for partnerships to advance battery recycling.

Fiscal Year 2025 Energy & Water Development, as passed by the House Committee on Appropriations

- Funding and direction for research and development of advanced separation technologies for the extraction and recovery of rare earth elements and other minerals from coal and coal byproducts; and
- Directing the Department of Energy (DOE) to demonstrate support for projects that will:
 - Advance the domestic supply chain for permanent rare earth magnets in defense applications and energy technologies, as well as other commercial products;
 - Enable domestic recycling of critical minerals at high qualities and grades;
 - Establish a competitive solicitation for RD&D projects that combine recycling technologies and rare earth element separation technologies; and
 - Direct the Manufacturing and Energy Supply Chains (MESC) to support manufacturing capacity by funding projects in support of onshoring the critical minerals supply chain.

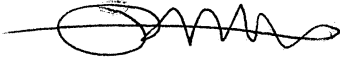
Fiscal Year 25 Energy & Water Development, as passed by the Senate Committee on Appropriations

- Funding of \$249,000,000 for the crosscutting Critical Materials Collaboration to advance domestic critical mining, production, processing, recycling, and manufacturing;
- Encouraging the Department to include alternative advanced battery technologies in its efforts to advance long-duration grid-scale energy storage and electric vehicles;
- Including \$450,000,00 for Vehicle Technologies including \$250,000,000 for battery and electrification technologies with direction to work to expand domestic manufacturing opportunities for domestic battery production;
- Encouraging the Department, as it works to achieve commercially viable grid-scale battery storage, to consider advanced battery charge control optimization technologies that will improve battery cycle life and promote critical mineral and material sustainability;
- Directing the Advanced Materials and Manufacturing Technologies Office, and the Vehicle Technologies Office to prioritize funding efforts to research, develop, prototype, and deploy technology to improve the circularity of battery supply chains and battery recycling in such a way to address critical mineral sustainability and reliability concerns;
- Continuing the Carbon Ore, Rare Earths, and Critical Minerals [Core-CM] including a joint project with the

- Department of Commerce and the USGS to enhance the security of the rare earth element supply chain; and
- Encouraging the Energy Information Administration to coordinate with USGS to complete detailed plans for modeling and forecasting of energy technologies that use minerals or that could be designated as critical minerals within FY24.

We appreciate your leadership and strongly urge you to take up and pass the FY25 NDAA and appropriations bills to ensure that the advancements we are making toward an independent critical minerals supply chain continue uninterrupted. The challenges ahead to securing a reliable and sustainable supply chain for the US economy and our national defense systems are substantial but meeting those challenges is imperative. There is no time to waste. Thank you for your leadership and for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Sarah Venuto
Executive Director
The American Critical Minerals Association

Cc:
Senator Patty Murray
Senator Susan Collins
Representative Kay Granger
Representative Rosa DeLauro
Senator Jack Reed
Senator Roger Wicker
Representative Mike Rogers
Representative Adam Smith

