

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0305

March 15, 2018

The Honorable Ken Calvert
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,
and Related Agencies
2205 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Betty McCollum
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,
and Related Agencies
2256 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Calvert and Ranking Member McCollum,

As you begin to work on the fiscal year 2019 (FY19) Interior and Environment Appropriations bill, we strongly urge you to support President Donald Trump's Critical Mineral National Security Strategy. President Trump and his Administration have published three Executive directives to begin important work on identifying immediate domestic sources for critical minerals.

First, President Trump issued Executive Order 13817, *A Federal Strategy to Ensure Secure and Reliable Supplies of Critical Minerals*, to break America's dependence on foreign minerals. Second, Secretary Zinke issued Secretarial Order 3359, *Critical Mineral Independence and Security*, to begin work on identifying immediate domestic sources for critical minerals. Third, for the first time, the President's FY19 Budget Request includes a specific line-item funding for Critical Minerals action at the United States Geological Survey (USGS).

The strategic and national interest in mining, public stewardship, and the need for coordinated action on a national critical minerals strategy is clear. These actions are overdue, and critical to our long-term national security and to the economic and industrial leadership of the country. This is particularly true in areas of the country where geophysical data suggests a high probability of significant critical mineral resources. Quite simply, one of the first steps to developing a long-term national plan for critical minerals is to identify where these mineral resources are located.

President Trump's new line-item of \$10,598,000 for critical minerals aims to "*improve the topographic, geologic, and geophysical mapping of the United States. Initial efforts will focus on conducting airborne geophysical surveys in a limited number of targeted areas where existing detailed topographic/elevation coverage is available and the mineral potential is predicted to be high, based on existing data. Priority targeted areas include portions of Alaska, the*

midcontinent region, and the Western United States. These areas likely contain significant mineral resources based on comparison with areas of similar geology elsewhere in the world.”

It is our understanding from organizations involved in geoscience, geology, photogrammetry, mapping, and geospatial data collection that this new program will require a significant investment over at least a decade to complete the mapping component. In order to accelerate the overdue critical minerals inventory, we request that you fully fund the President’s request and prioritize monies to increase funding for this mission.

The data produced by this new activity will benefit our defense, trade, economic, and national security strategies. We look forward to working with you and the Administration to identify and curtail our reliance on foreign-sourced critical minerals.

Sincerely,




Andy Biggs
Member of Congress



Paul Gosar
Member of Congress



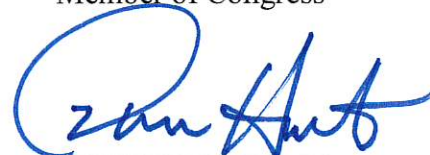
Rob Bishop
Member of Congress




Doug Lamborn
Member of Congress



Greg Gianforte
Member of Congress



Duncan Hunter
Member of Congress



Glenn Grothman
Member of Congress