

**Chair Cathy McMorris Rodgers**  
**Opening Statement—Subcommittee on Environment,  
Manufacturing, and Critical Materials:**  
**“Securing America’s Critical Materials Supply Chains and  
Economic Leadership”**  
**June 13, 2024**  
*As prepared for delivery*

Good morning and thank you Chairman Carter for suggesting we hold this important hearing.

Today’s hearing is an opportunity to examine how we reduce our dependence on China and take the steps necessary to maintaining American economic leadership for decades to come.

An important step to achieving this is to significantly increase our domestic production and supply of critical materials...

...which are foundational to America’s ability to manufacture goods like batteries, electric grid components, semiconductors, and advanced energy technologies, which are crucial to our economic and national security.

If we fail, America will continue to be dangerously reliant upon others for these critical materials, in particular adversaries like China, and vulnerable to supply chain disruptions and market manipulation.

It starts with having an honest conversation about what has led us to where we are today and how we have become so dependent on others.

Only then will we be able to advance the solutions necessary to creating the regulatory predictability needed for mining, processing, and refining of these materials domestically...

...ending our reliance on others, ensuring stable access to critical materials, boosting American manufacturing, and protecting America’s economic future and national security.

Over the last several decades, America’s capacity to mine, process, and refine minerals has been decimated.

The United States was once one of the world’s leading producer of the minerals and metals that are foundational to America’s economic success and national security.

Today, more than 90% of those minerals are under the control of the Chinese Communist Party.

Their supply chains stretch from the jungles of the African Congo to smelters and refineries in China.

We have allowed them to establish a monopoly on the core components needed to produce the batteries powering our smartphones, computers, electric cars, and many renewable sources of energy.

To make matters worse, they do this with zero regard for any environmental, labor, or human rights standards.

The Biden Administration's rush to green agenda will only further solidify China's stranglehold on the market.

By advancing policies that mandate technologies whose core components can only be sourced from China...

...while failing to advance policies to onshore production of those core components, we are only further enriching China...

...The largest polluter in the world.

The Inflation Reduction Act and Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act were filled with these mandates, and pumped hundreds of billions of taxpayer dollars into subsidizing the purchasing of these technologies, exasperating the problem.

We cannot continue doing the same thing over and over again and expect anything to change.

We have to get serious about getting to the root cause of the problem, which is overburdensome regulation, and start advancing the policies necessary to onshoring production of critical materials.

The U.S. has enacted the strongest environmental laws in the world, which have helped us clean up our air and water over the last half century.

It's possible to continue building on our legacy of environmental stewardship without pushing our supply chains overseas.

To do this, however, we need reasonable solutions, rather than a continuation of the current regulatory and legal environment that has all but forced U.S. mines and smelters out of business or out of the country.

The good news is that the U.S. has been blessed with tremendous natural resources. We have a rich history of harnessing and leveraging these resources through free market principles.

Today I look forward to discussing what is necessary to continue building on that legacy.

We do it by standing up for American values of free market competition, innovation, environmental stewardship...

...better aligning our environmental goals with our goals for economic growth and national security...

... and securing and growing our critical material supply chains to end America's dependence on adversaries like China.

Thank you to the witnesses for providing your testimony today, I yield back.