

Chairman Gary Palmer
Opening Statement—Subcommittee on Environment
“From Trash to Treasure: Examining Legislation to Support Domestic
Critical Mineral Recovery and Recycling”
June 24, 2026

Good morning, and welcome to today’s hearing of the Subcommittee on Environment.

A little over two months ago, this Subcommittee held a hearing to analyze the impact of some of our major environmental laws on access to critical minerals and materials that form the products essential to our healthcare, defense, transportation, energy, and telecommunications sectors.

The title of the hearing was “Help or Hindrance? The impact of U.S. Environmental Laws on Critical Material Supply Chains, National Security, and Economic Growth.” In particular, we discussed some of the challenges associated with the Environmental Protection Agency’s or “EPA’s” interpretation of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act or “RCRA” (“Rick-Rah”). While some of our witnesses explained that

RCRA had been a “hindrance,” largely due to lack of regulatory clarity, there are also opportunities for it to be a “help.”

Even as early as 1976 when RCRA was enacted to amend the Solid Waste Disposal Act, Congress included in that law its findings that “methods are available to separate useable materials from solid waste,” and “the recovery and conservation of such materials can reduce the dependence of the United States on foreign resources.”

EPA has developed unique knowledge that should be leveraged to shore up domestic supply chains and identify opportunities to facilitate recovery of domestic material from discarded materials. This experience is not limited to solid waste management. EPA also coordinates the remediation of the nation’s most contaminated sites. In recent years, EPA has explored opportunities to use innovative technologies to recover valuable materials while cleaning up these contaminated sites. EPA currently manages a program called the Environmental Monitoring and Remediation Technology Assessment or “EMRTAI” (“Emmer-tai”) to identify and recover critical minerals in waste materials at legacy mining sites.

According to the United States Geological Survey, the United States is entirely reliant on imports for 13 of the 60 mineral commodities on its 2025 list of critical minerals. And it is reliant on imports for over half of its consumption of another 20 minerals. Removing regulatory barriers to a more robust domestic recycling industry could allow us to recover more of these minerals from products already in the United States.

Deliberate federal coordination has never been more important, with adversaries such as China demonstrating that they are willing and able to weaponize their control of crucial supply chains. Securing our fragile supply chains requires coordination across the entire Federal government, and it is important for EPA to have a seat at the table.

To that end, we plan to discuss seven bills to eliminate unnecessary barriers to the growth of a strong domestic recycling industry, establish EPA as a leader of interagency efforts to recover critical minerals, and support the remediation of contaminated sites while identifying new domestic sources of valuable materials.

I hope we can continue working together with our colleagues on the other side of the aisle to reach bipartisan agreement on these discussion drafts. I am encouraged by our initial conversations and look forward to finalizing bills that can advance with bipartisan support. To help us in these efforts today, we welcome four witnesses. First, we have Mr. David Klanecky, Chief Executive Officer of Cirba (“Sir-bah”) Solutions. Cirba Solutions is a leading battery recycling materials and management company.

We are also joined by Dr. Jessica Dunn, Scientist, Clean Transportation, at the Union of Concerned Scientists. Dr. Dunn specializes in lithium-ion battery sustainability research.

We also welcome Mr. Aaron Goldberg, a principal at Beveridge and Diamond. An environmental attorney, Mr. Goldberg will call upon his decades of experience with the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act.

Finally, we will also hear from Mr. Greyson Buckingham, Co-Founder, Chief Executive Officer, and President of DISA (“Diss-ah”)

Technologies. DISA has developed innovative technologies to recover minerals from legacy mine sites.

I thank all of our witnesses for their time today, and I look forward to today's discussion.