

- **Finally, Members or witnesses experiencing technical problems should inform committee staff immediately.**
- **With that, I will begin my opening statement.**
- **This week marks the 150th anniversary of the Mining Law of 1872. Usually, anniversaries are something to celebrate, but in this case, it's a stark reminder that the time for change is long overdue.**
- **The mining industry has seized the opportunity to wreak havoc on our public lands, environment, Indigenous communities, and public health—without any semblance of accountability.**
- **This is an industry that appears to think that America's public lands are its birthright, and they should be able to pick and choose where they get to dig and what they get to spoil, all without paying a cent of royalties.**

- **They have it backwards.**
- **America's public lands belong to all Americans, not the mining industry.**
- **That's why I introduced legislation to overhaul the Mining Law of 1872. And that's why I think it's as important as ever to put it into law.**
- **My Clean Energy Minerals Reform Act will improve the way we do mining in several fundamental ways.**
- **First, this bill puts a royalty in place for all minerals extracted from public lands. Under the current law, mining companies don't pay a single cent to use our public lands.**
- **Not even Big Oil has a deal that slanted toward industry.**

- **Second, the bill protects special places and brings mining under the land-use planning process.**
- **When we talk about threats to the Grand Canyon, or the Boundary Waters, or Indigenous sacred sites like Oak Flat or Bears Ears, it all comes back to the fundamental flaw in the Mining Law that tilts the balance of power away from land managers acting on behalf of the American people and towards the mining industry's corporate profits. My bill gives power back to land managers and sets benchmark environmental standards for permitting and reclamation.**
- **Third, this legislation protects tribal sovereignty and requires meaningful tribal consultation.**

- **For too long tribes have been overlooked when it comes to land management, and mining is no exception. This bill ensures that federal agencies hear directly from tribes that are impacted by mining projects.**
- **And finally, the bill finishes the work of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law by providing a dedicated source of funding for abandoned hardrock mine cleanup.**
- **While that law moved us in the right direction, hardrock mine cleanup didn't get any funding. My bill makes sure that industry, not taxpayers, foots the bill for their toxic legacy of pollution.**
- **There's a lot of interest in Congress and the Administration right now about critical minerals – especially minerals that are important for renewable energy and our clean energy transition.**

- **We shouldn't sacrifice tribal sacred sites, wilderness, national forests, public health, just because the metals coming from the ground would go into a wind turbine or a solar panel or and electric vehicle battery.**
- **I think the Biden Administration gets it. We all want to see mining done under the best possible labor and environmental standards but that isn't possible without a comprehensive rewrite of the Mining Law.**
- **I hope that today's hearing makes it clear why this legislation is so necessary, but also highlights the places where we all might agree.**
- **I look forward to hearing from the Biden Administration and our invited witnesses on the legislation. Thank you all for being here.**