April 24, 2026

The Honorable Pete Stauber
Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources
Committee on Natural Resources
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Yassamin Ansari
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources
Committee on Natural Resources
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Stauber, Ranking Member Ansari, and Members of the Subcommittee:

The AI Supply Chain Alliance (AI-SCA) thanks you for announcing the upcoming hearing entitled "Powering the 21st Century with American Copper." We appreciate the Subcommittee's focus on increasing the production of copper and securing its supply chain, and for the opportunity to submit this letter for the hearing record.

The AI-SCA is a coalition of companies involved in developing the physical infrastructure, energy systems, and materials supply chains necessary to support the continued growth of artificial intelligence in the United States. Our work centers on the foundational inputs of power, permitting, and critical materials. We support targeted permitting reforms, which we believe may determine whether the United States can meet infrastructure demands and maintain leadership in the next generation of technological and economic competition.

Copper is a key mineral for electrification and plays an essential role in building and maintaining the power infrastructure that supports the U.S. digital economy, including data centers, grid expansion, and advanced technologies. Ensuring reliable access to copper is not only an energy issue, but also essential to scaling AI and maintaining U.S. economic competitiveness and national security.

Electrical equipment manufacturers globally are increasingly concerned about a looming copper shortfall, driven by bottlenecks across the supply chain, from upstream mining to smelting, refining, and downstream fabrication. While expanding mining capacity is critical, additional investment in smelting and refining will also be necessary to meet

projected demand. We support U.S. government efforts to address these constraints, including permitting reform and strengthening access to reliable supplies from allied partners through such mechanisms as plurilateral critical minerals agreements.

Important visibility gaps remain within the copper supply chain. While there is robust data on mining and refining capacity, less is known about intermediate processing stages. Refined cathode is transformed into products such as wire, busbar, and foil through specialized processes not consistently tracked, making it difficult to identify emerging bottlenecks. Improved data collection would support more effective policymaking.

Copper pricing dynamics also warrant careful consideration. While recent increases are largely correlated to supply and demand, copper is a highly financialized commodity across multiple global exchanges, which can amplify price volatility and exacerbate perceived shortages. Policymakers should therefore consider both physical supply constraints and market dynamics when evaluating supply risks.

As highlighted in S&P Global's recent report, the mismatch between copper supply and demand presents a significant near-term risk. Demand is expected to increase by 2040, driven by data center growth, grid modernization, and electrification, while new supply is becoming more difficult to bring online due to permitting timelines and global competition. Without action, supply constraints and price volatility could slow infrastructure buildout, delay energy and data center projects, and weaken U.S. competitiveness in the global AI race. Addressing this challenge will require policies that support timely project development and a more resilient, reliable domestic copper supply chain, including improvements to permitting efficiency and support for responsible domestic production.

We appreciate the Subcommittee's attention to this issue and stand ready to serve as a resource as you consider policies to strengthen domestic mineral supply chains. Ensuring a reliable copper supply will be essential to powering the infrastructure that underpins U.S. innovation, economic growth, and global competitiveness in the decades ahead.

Respectfully,

Tom Lawler
Partner, Coefficient

On behalf of the

AI Supply Chain Alliance