



May 8, 2026

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

Dear Chairman Stauber:

Thank you for holding your recent subcommittee hearing, "*Powering the 21st Century with American Copper*", and for the opportunity to submit this letter for the record.

To begin, this is one of the most important strategic conversations our nation needs to have, and it is long overdue. Copper is perhaps our most important strategic mineral and it is becoming more so with the continued push for more electrification across America and around the world. This was spelled out earlier this year in the report by S&P Global, "*Copper in the age of AI.*" This report alerted policymakers to the increased copper demand associated with the advent of AI and the corresponding gap with forecasted copper supply. And this is on top of the increased copper demand associated with growing use of renewable energy technologies, electrification across many parts of our economy, and from the military for our national defense needs.

As you are aware, the Pebble Project in Alaska represents the largest undeveloped copper deposit in North America and, frankly, the world. Over the span of the 20-year mining plan we took into permitting, we estimated total production of 2.9 million metric tons of copper which would make a significant contribution to our nation's copper needs. And, following additional rounds of permitting and approvals, there is the potential to mine copper at the site for decades.

However, throughout the course of this project we have been stymied by the political use of the Environmental Protection Agency's preemptive 404 (c) veto. This has not only caused significant uncertainty for our project, but it has also caused many in the mining and resource development community to question whether their project could be next. It remains bad policy that must be addressed to ensure greater stability and predictability in permitting American mineral and energy projects. Your committee has heard and received comments from across the mining industry about the importance of stability in permitting as necessary for investment and I echo those remarks.

We entered into permitting with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 2017 and received a final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the project in the summer of 2020. This EIS clearly stated the project could successfully operate in Alaska without harm to the fishery and water resources nearby. It further stated that the jobs and economic opportunities from the proposed mine would be substantial in Alaska, especially Southwest Alaska where year-round



employment opportunities are scarce. And it would make significant tax contributions to Alaska and the nation. The economic opportunities for the nation from Alaska development have been well documented and our project's activity would be felt well beyond Alaska.

As your committee continues to identify the many barriers to increasing U.S. copper mining, it is worth noting that time should also be spent looking at ways to increase domestic mineral processing. Many companies and universities are looking at new technologies to accomplish this. However, given the intensive investment China makes in undercutting the costs of processing to stifle competition, and their control over nearly 50 percent of the processed copper market, the U.S. will need to dedicate financial resources to help ensure we achieve more domestic processing to dampen our dependence on foreign sources. We are evaluating a promising technology called hydrometallurgy for our project and are aware of others doing their own research about it. Whether it will work for our project remains to be seen. However, I am encouraged that so many others within the industry are looking for ways to decrease our dependence on foreign processing.

To sum up, we support your subcommittee's interest in increasing American copper production. To accomplish this goal, we need permitting predictability which encourages greater investment in domestic mining opportunities as we compete globally for these financial resources. We appreciate the work you and others on the House Committee on Natural Resources have done to address this nettlesome issue. We also need to rethink our approach to domestic processing to ensure the U.S. becomes more self-sufficient when it comes to copper.

It has long been my view that China seeks to become the OPEC of copper supply and processing. The policy proposals advanced by hearings such as yours will help the U.S. prevent this.

I join with leaders from across the mining industry in expressing our appreciation for all the work you and others in the House have done to improve the nation's permitting system. We sincerely hope that the Senate follows your lead.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John Shively". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light blue rectangular background.

John Shively, CEO
The Pebble Partnership

