



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
NATURAL RESOURCES
CHAIRMAN BRUCE WESTERMAN

To: Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources Republican Members
From: Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources Staff: Annie Caputo (Annie.Caputo@mail.house.gov), Ray Phillips (Ray.Phillips@mail.house.gov), and Sam Harvey (Sam.Harvey@mail.house.gov); x5-9297
Date: Monday, April 27, 2026
Subject: Oversight Hearing titled *“Powering the 21st Century with American Copper”*

The Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources will hold an oversight hearing titled *“Powering the 21st Century with American Copper”* on **Wednesday, April 29, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. in room 1324 Longworth House Office Building.**

Member offices are requested to notify Kenna Cline (Kenna.Cline@mail.house.gov) by 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 28, 2026, if their Member intends to participate in the hearing.

I. KEY MESSAGES

- Copper is a fundamental component of modern life. It is essential for the wiring, circuitry, and motors of everything that uses electricity: cellphones, laptops, and communications technology; home appliances and heating and cooling systems; cars, aircraft, and other vehicles; as well as advanced military technologies. Copper is also used to build pipes that transport clean water, refrigerants, and even medical gases in hospitals.
- Reliable and affordable supplies of copper are essential for national security, energy security, and economic competitiveness.
- The world’s demand for copper is increasing, due to a range of factors that include growing global electricity demand; increasing electrification in the developing world; expanding information technology and artificial intelligence (AI); burgeoning renewable energy infrastructure, including electric cars and batteries; and increasing applications of copper for national security purposes.
- As with other critical minerals, China dominates copper processing for geopolitical leverage. By exploiting global dependency on its copper, China can coerce, influence, or manipulate the United States (U.S.) and its allies.
- Congress must act quickly to improve permitting processes and other policies to develop crucial domestic mining and processing projects, unleash technological innovation, and secure affordable, reliable, and resilient supplies of copper to sustain our national security, economic competitiveness, and way of life.

II. WITNESSES

Panel I (Outside Experts)

- **Mr. Daniel Yergin**, Vice Chairman, S&P Global, Washington, D.C.
- **Mr. Adam Estelle**, President and CEO, Copper Development Association, McLean, VA
- **Ms. Debra Phillips**, President and CEO, National Electrical Manufacturers Association, Arlington, VA
- **Dr. Michele Bustamante**, Staff Scientist, Natural Resources Defense Council, Washington, D.C. [Minority Witness]

III. BACKGROUND

Overview

In January 2026, S&P Global released a report entitled, “Copper in the Age of AI: Challenges of Electrification,” which succinctly expresses one of the key rationales for holding an oversight hearing focused on the significance of copper:

“Copper’s role as the linchpin of electrification, digitalization, and security in the age of AI is both an opportunity and a challenge. The intersection of accelerating demand, constrained supply, and concentrated processing capacity creates systemic risks that require responses from policymakers, regulators, industry, and investors. The choices made in the coming years will determine whether copper remains an enabler of progress or becomes a bottleneck to growth and innovation.”¹

The report, chaired by hearing witness Daniel Yergin, projects a 10-million-metric-ton shortfall of copper in a 42-million-metric-ton global market in 2040.

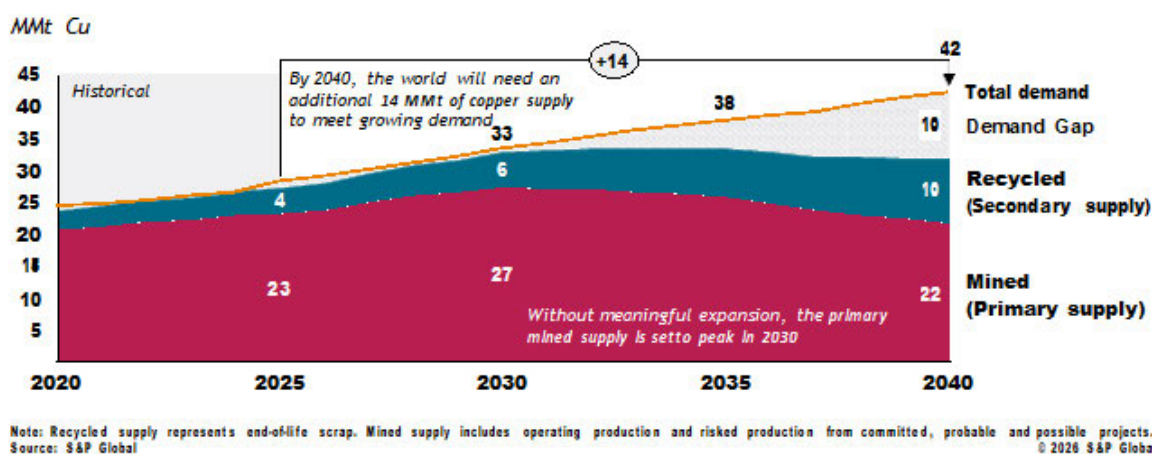


Figure 1: Total copper market balance (2020-2040). Source: S&P Global, 2026.

Sufficient, reliable, and affordable domestic production of copper will be vital for America’s national and economic security, especially amid a looming global supply shortfall.

¹ S&P Global, “Copper in the Age of AI: Challenges of Electrification,” January .

The Importance of Copper

Copper is essential to modern life. It is a crucial component of modern infrastructure, including that supporting electricity, water, communications, data, and transportation systems.² Almost everything that produces or uses electricity requires copper: all types of power generation, electrical motors in manufacturing, and air and ground transportation. Copper is also necessary for cellphones, cell towers, computers, servers, and data centers.³

Copper piping delivers safe drinking water and keeps refrigeration humming.⁴ Copper also has medical applications, like piping for medical gases in hospitals, and is naturally anti-microbial, which is useful for sanitizing frequently touched surfaces.⁵ Copper alloys are common to many engines for transportation, emergency response vehicles, farm equipment, and aircraft.⁶

Beyond its civil applications, copper is strategically important for national security. Copper is necessary for a wide range of electrical systems in military aircraft, naval vessels, satellites, and digital infrastructure. Drones use “advanced sensors, command and control communications systems, batteries, and computing infrastructure,” each requiring copper wiring, circuit boards, and electrical components.⁷

Global Copper Demand is Increasing

S&P Global estimates that worldwide copper demand will grow by 50 percent by 2040, from 28 million metric tons to 42 million metric tons.⁸ This growth in demand is driven by multiple factors, many of which are described below.

As electrification increases around the world, global electricity consumption is estimated to grow 50 percent by 2040.⁹ In the U.S. alone, electricity consumption is growing at 2.5 percent per year.¹⁰ The Edison Electric Institute has estimated that investor-owned electric companies will invest over \$1.1 trillion in the grid by 2029 to support growing electricity demand.¹¹ Sufficient, reliable, and affordable supplies of electricity will require sufficient, reliable, and affordable supplies of copper.

Basic needs are also driving growth in copper demand. As the developing world shifts away from wood and waste for heating and cooking, electricity use will grow and more copper will be

² Copper Development Association, “Element of Life, Productivity, Economy,” <https://copper.org/education/copper-industry/>.

³ *Id.*

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ Phil Ehr, “Copper, Conflict, and National Security: Why Critical Minerals are the Backbone of America’s Future,” Real Clear Energy, March 26, 2026,

https://www.realclearenergy.org/articles/2026/03/26/copper_conflict_and_national_security_why_critical_minerals_are_the_backbone_of_americas_future_1172713.html.

⁸ S&P Global, “Copper in the Age of AI: Challenges of Electrification,” January 8, 2026, <https://www.spglobal.com/en/research-insights/special-reports/copper-in-the-age-of-ai>.

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ *Id.*

¹¹ Sonal Patel, “Investor-Owned Utilities to Spend \$1.1 Trillion in Grid Boost as Power Demand Spirals,” Power Magazine, October 9, 2025, <https://www.powermag.com/investor-owned-utilities-to-spend-1-1t-in-grid-boost-as-power-demand-spirals/>.

needed. For another example, the developing world is projected to add two billion air conditioners by 2040.¹² Copper is needed both to manufacture and to power these devices.

Efforts to transition energy use toward non-emitting sources also require significant quantities of copper. Electric vehicles, for example, require 2.9 times the copper of a conventional vehicle. Solar power, wind power, and batteries all require copper.¹³

AI is another factor driving growing copper demand. According to S&P Global: “In 2025, half of US Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth is attributed to AI spending—largely on computer chips, data centers, and the electric power systems on which they run.”¹⁴ Copper is necessary for both the AI infrastructure and the electricity production that powers it.

Lastly, national security needs for copper are growing amid the geopolitical tensions and the push for advanced technologies. As noted by S&P Global: “Modern weaponry, communications, and infrastructure are increasingly copper-intensive, and defense-driven demand is projected to triple by 2040.”¹⁵

After analyzing these factors driving global growth in copper demand, S&P Global projects “...a potential 10-million-metric-ton copper shortfall by 2040 without meaningful supply expansion.”¹⁶

Copper’s Rising Price

In 2025, copper reached record highs, climbing 7.6 percent.¹⁷ In 2026, the price of copper is expected to climb another 14.5 percent (year-on-year) to \$11,415 per ton.¹⁸ Because copper is used so widely, price increases will have ripple effects in the economy.

One example is the potential impact to electricity prices as utilities expand electricity supplies. The North American Electric Reliability Council states: “Electricity peak demand and energy growth forecasts over the 10-year assessment period continue to climb higher than at any point in the past two decades.”¹⁹ The Energy Information Administration’s Annual Energy Outlook for 2026 states that: “To meet growing electricity demand, installed electric generating capacity increases between 50% and 90% by 2050.” The Edison Electric Institute’s member companies are reportedly planning \$1.1 trillion in capital investments by 2030 to meet the growing demand for electricity. Electricity infrastructure development will require significant amounts of copper. Increases in copper prices will be reflected in the higher price of equipment and infrastructure needed, which ultimately will impact electricity prices.

¹² S&P Global, “Copper in the Age of AI: Challenges of Electrification,” January 8, 2026, <https://www.spglobal.com/en/research-insights/special-reports/copper-in-the-age-of-ai>.

¹³ *Id.*

¹⁴ *Id.*

¹⁵ *Id.*

¹⁶ *Id.*

¹⁷ S&P Global, “2026 Metals Price Outlook: Peaks, Corrections, Risks, and Opportunities,” January 2026, <https://energy.spglobal.com/2026-metals-price-outlook-report.html>.

¹⁸ *Id.*

¹⁹ North American Electric Reliability Corporation, “Long-Term Reliability Assessment”, January 2026, https://prod.nerc.com/globalassets/our-work/assessments/nerc_ltra_2025.pdf.

Copper Theft

Copper's skyrocketing value in recent years has prompted a surge of thievery. High prices and easily accessible copper present in communications and power infrastructure across the country have made copper theft attractive. Between January and June of 2025, the Internet & Television Association reported 9,770 incidents of intentional theft or sabotage to communications networks—nearly double the number for the prior six-month period.²⁰ Those nearly ten thousand incidents affected more than 8 million individual customers. The out-of-control theft has disconnected 911 calls,²¹ caused deadly traffic accidents²², and left innocent families without power.²³

After stealing the copper, thieves typically take it to a local recycling facility and get paid cash for the material.²⁴ The abundance of stealable copper, the relatively untraceable nature of the material, and the cash-based nature of the transaction make copper thievery hard to combat. One Los Angeles County detective compared the situation to the “wild west.”²⁵ In particularly plagued states, AT&T has a standing reward of \$20,000 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of copper thieves.²⁶ 14 states last year had to enact new laws,²⁷ and the City of Los Angeles established a specialized Heavy Metal Task Force from 2024 to 2025 to crack down on copper theft²⁸.

While certain states experience copper theft at rates much higher than others, this is not a localized issue.²⁹ In October of last year, Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Commissioner Olivia Britt Trusty said copper theft was a “growing epidemic ... hitting every part of the country.”³⁰ Until copper demand is met and prices reach an affordable equilibrium, copper theft is likely to continue, leading to enormous costs for private industry and taxpayers, not to mention legitimate health and safety risks associated with dangerous infrastructure outages.

²⁰ Katherine Sayre & Patience Haggin, “Copper Thieves Are Wreaking Havoc Across America,” The Wall Street Journal, November 29, 2025, <https://www.wsj.com/business/telecom/copper-thieves-are-wreaking-havoc-across-america-9135906f>.

²¹ NCTA - The Internet & Television Association, “Critical Networks at Risk: A Nationwide Snapshot of Attacks on Communications Infrastructure,” January 22, 2026, <https://www.ncta.com/news/critical-networks-nationwide-snapshot-attacks-communications-infrastructure>.

²² KGW News, “Theft of copper wire from traffic light contributed to crash that killed motorcyclist, police say,” December 23, 2025, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B-Z9HEgoOaA>.

²³ Pamela Sleezer, “Copper thefts resulting in power outages for businesses, residents,” American Press, March 21, 2026, <https://americanpress.com/2026/03/21/copper-thefts-resulting-in-power-outages-for-businesses-residents/>.

²⁴ Katherine Sayre & Patience Haggin, “Copper Thieves Are Wreaking Havoc Across America,” The Wall Street Journal, November 29, 2025, <https://www.wsj.com/business/telecom/copper-thieves-are-wreaking-havoc-across-america-9135906f>.

²⁵ Samantha Delouya, “Copper prices are rising. Thieves are taking notice,” CNN, December 22, 2025, <https://www.cnn.com/2025/12/22/economy/copper-wire-theft-att-outages>.

²⁶ AT&T, “AT&T Copper Theft Protection – Protecting Our Network, Protecting Your Connection,” <https://about.att.com/pages/copper-theft-prevention>.

²⁷ Katherine Sayre & Patience Haggin, “Copper Thieves Are Wreaking Havoc Across America,” The Wall Street Journal, November 29, 2025, <https://www.wsj.com/business/telecom/copper-thieves-are-wreaking-havoc-across-america-9135906f>.

²⁸ Angie Orellana Hernandez, “‘Significant victory’: More than 80 arrested in copper wire theft crackdown,” LA Times, July 30, 2024, <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2024-07-30/copper-wire-arrests>.

²⁹ NCTA et al., “Fall 2025 Report: Protecting the Nation’s Critical Communications Infrastructure From Theft & Vandalism,” October 2025, https://protectcci.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/CriticalAttacksReport_Oct25.pdf.

³⁰ Commissioner Olivia Britt Trusty, “Responding to a Growing threat: Defending Communications Infrastructure from Attack,” Federal Communications Commission, October 7, 2025, <https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DOC-415046A1.pdf>.

Geopolitical Risk Due to Concentrated Processing Capacity

As with other critical minerals, China dominates copper processing, giving it geopolitical leverage. By exploiting global dependency on its copper, China can coerce, influence, or manipulate the U.S. and its allies. China's 2025 refined copper output is estimated to have grown by up to 12 percent, putting the country's share of global output at almost 60 percent.³¹ Since the turn of the century, China's domestic copper consumption has quickly risen, leading the country to establish a whole-of-government approach to processing and sourcing.³² As a result of those efforts, China has developed a track record of pursuing critical mineral monopolies and engaging in predatory market manipulation to exclude would-be competitors.³³ With other minerals, China has been known to flood markets to lower prices, ultimately forcing competition to seek other investments.³⁴ The country's ability to subsidize its state-owned companies and operate refineries at a loss also gives China the ability to outlast international, non-state subsidized operations during periods of low prices or supply chain disruptions.³⁵ China will continue tightening its chokehold on the global copper industry, leading to further price manipulation and dangerous geopolitical pressure. The best way to combat this aggressive strategy is to responsibly develop American resources, in that the United States would gain a reliable domestic supply, create domestic jobs and drive economic growth.

Industry Actions to Increase Supply

Despite recent progress in copper mine permitting, we need to pursue even greater domestic extraction and processing. In the last three years alone, U.S. refined copper imports have nearly doubled and import reliance has grown to 57 percent.³⁶ The best way to meet increasing copper demand is by developing the resources we already have here in America. Multiple companies have invested heavily to expand domestic production, but more work will be needed to meet projected demand. On average, it takes over 19 years for a new copper mine to go from discovery to production.³⁷ There is a clear choice: if we want reliable, secure, and affordable copper in the future, we need permitting reform to spur immediate investment in domestic copper mining and processing. 48 percent of domestic copper concentrate is being exported, often to China, for refining.³⁸ Without increasing smelter capacity, the U.S. will become even more reliant on foreign refining, ultimately threatening economic and national security.

³¹ Amy Lv & Lewis Jackson, "China 2025 copper output set to hit record high despite feedstock shortages," Reuters, August 1, 2025, <https://www.reuters.com/markets/commodities/china-2025-copper-output-set-hit-record-high-despite-feedstock-shortages-2025-08-01/>.

³² S&P Global, "Copper in the Age of AI: Challenges of Electrification," January 8, 2026, <https://www.spglobal.com/en/research-insights/special-reports/copper-in-the-age-of-ai>.

³³ The Select Committee on the Strategic Competition Between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party, "Predatory Pricing: How the Chinese Communist Party Manipulates Global Mineral Prices to Maintain Its Dominance," <https://chinaselectcommittee.house.gov/sites/evo-subsites/selectcommitteeontheccp.house.gov/files/evo-media-document/china-interim-report-on-price-manipulation-w.toc-compressed.pdf>.

³⁴ *Id.*

³⁵ *Id.*

³⁶ U.S. Geological Survey, "Mineral Commodities Summaries 2026," <https://pubs.usgs.gov/periodicals/mcs2026/mcs2026.pdf>.

³⁷ Paul Manalo, "From 6 years to 18 years: The increasing trend of mine lead times," S&P Global, April 11, 2026, <https://www.spglobal.com/market-intelligence/en/news-insights/research/from-6years-to-18years-the-increasing-trend-of-mine-lead-times>.

³⁸ Luke Balleny, "The US Copper Industry Needs a Strategy, Not a Contradiction," World Resources Institute, December 12, 2025, <https://www.wri.org/insights/us-copper-industry-needs-strategy-not-contradiction>; Agustín de Vicente, "US copper glut hides a refining crunch as concentrate exports rise, Benchmark says," Mining Reporters, February 19, 2026, <https://www.miningreporters.com/noticia/news/2026/02/us-copper-glut-refining-bottleneck-benchmark-report-concentrate-exports#:~:text=Benchmark%20Mineral%20Intelligence%20says%20the,into%20usable%20metal%20at%20home>.

Innovation

Amid rising demand and looming supply deficits, operators are developing new ways to boost domestic copper mining and processing productivity, increase output at existing sites, and bring new, previously overlooked sources of supply online.

Advanced Technologies. In 2026, Utah’s Copper One mine restarted production with a focus on advanced software and end-to-end autonomous operations.³⁹ These technologies allow operators to optimize drill patterns, haulage routing, blending strategies, and energy use—while continuously learning from outcomes and reducing costs.⁴⁰ Outside of extraction, Copper One has also retooled its processing operations to include both mined ore and scrap feedstocks. This adjustment allows the project to sustain greater output from a more diverse resource base.⁴¹

In-situ Recovery. Another innovation in copper production can be seen at Arizona’s Florence Copper Mine, which recently began deploying in-situ copper recovery (ISCR) methods at-scale.⁴² Rather than extracting ore for surface processing, ISCR uses chemical processes to separate copper from rock beneath the surface, which significantly reduces energy costs compared to conventional methods.⁴³ This process also allows operators to produce refined copper cathodes directly at the mine site, rather than sending ore to a smelter.⁴⁴ Similarly, Arizona’s Johnson Camp Mine has restarted production after more than a decade of inactivity by implementing Nuton Technology—a cutting-edge bioleaching process that unlocks previously uneconomic quantities of low-grade copper ore for extraction in commercial quantities.⁴⁵ These and related innovations across the copper supply chain will play a key role going forward—both in enhancing domestic production and in exporting American-made technologies to allies abroad.

Recycling. Recycling makes an important contribution to supply, but new mines are also necessary to meet demand. As demand grows, recycling output will lag, leaving a substantial gap that can only be filled by new production. Recently, the Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources held a hearing focused on domestic mining efforts. When asked if there was enough existing supply to meet future demand for *any* mineral via recycling alone, all four of the hearing’s witnesses, including one who did not support new domestic mining operations, answered “no.”⁴⁶ Clearly, that new supply *must* enter the supply chain via expanded mining. It is up to the American people, however, whether that material will be sourced from environmentally damaging and human rights violating countries like China or come from right here in the U.S., which boasts the highest environmental and labor standards in the world.

³⁹ Jacob Lorinc, “Horowitz-Backed Firm to Revive Idled Utah Copper Mine,” Bloomberg, March 13, 2026,

<https://news.bloomberglaw.com/environment-and-energy/horowitz-backed-firm-to-revive-idled-utah-copper-mine-1>.

⁴⁰ Mariana Minerals, “Announcing Copper One: The World’s Only Autonomy-First Mine and Refinery,” March 16, 2026,

<https://marianaminerals.com/news/copper-one>.

⁴¹ *Id.*

⁴² Ryan Dezember, “America’s Newest Copper Mine is Ramping Up in Arizona,” The Wall Street Journal, March 25, 2026,

<https://www.wsj.com/livecoverage/stock-market-today-dow-sp-500-nasdaq-03-25-2026/card/america-s-newest-copper-mine-is-ramping-up-in-arizona-lRC45jI0BUAr1kGSoXjO?gaa>.

⁴³ Taseko Mines, “Florence Copper,” <https://www.tasekomines.com/properties/florence-copper/>.

⁴⁴ *Id.*

⁴⁵ Ryan Dezember, “Can Arizona Miners Unleash an American Copper Boom?” The Wall Street Journal, December 2, 2025,

<https://www.wsj.com/finance/commodities-futures/can-arizona-miners-unleash-an-american-copper-boom-982638ff>.

⁴⁶ House Natural Resources Committee, Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources Legislative Hearing, February 24, 2026, <https://naturalresources.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=418607>.

Economic Benefits of Copper Production

The copper industry directly employs more than 65,000 workers earning over \$31 billion in wages. When direct, indirect, and induced jobs are accounted for, the copper industry contributes \$160 billion in economic output and \$13 billion in federal, state, and local taxes.⁴⁷

A skilled workforce is crucial to support a growing copper industry. However, the industry is facing a talent shortage and needs workforce development in a range of fields, but particularly specialist fields like mining engineering and geology. Enrollment in mining engineering has fallen 45 percent since 2015, and the number of mining programs has dropped to 14 nationwide, with only six offering metallurgical mining. In 2020, U.S. mining schools awarded only 327 degrees, compared to over 5,000 graduates from China's 44 mining programs. Further, much of America's existing mining workforce is nearing retirement and will need to be replaced, creating a significant workforce development challenge.

Executive Actions and Legislative Reforms

From day one of his second term, President Trump has acted swiftly to unleash domestic copper production and shore up key supply chain vulnerabilities. On January 20, 2025, the President signed Executive Order (E.O.) 14154, "Unleashing American Energy," which directs federal agencies to revise and rescind actions that impose undue burdens on domestic mining and instructs the Secretary of the Interior to accelerate ongoing geologic mapping efforts.⁴⁸

On March 20, 2025, President Trump issued E.O. 14241, "Immediate Measures to Increase Mineral Production."⁴⁹ This directive further supports domestic copper mining by requiring federal agencies to prioritize mineral development and related activities on suitable federal lands, including land known to hold valuable deposits and reserves.⁵⁰ E.O. 14241 also directs agencies to identify and expedite priority mineral production projects "that can be immediately approved or for which permits can be immediately issued."⁵¹

Additionally, on April 15, 2025, President Trump signed E.O. 14272, "Ensuring National Security and Economic Resilience Through Section 232 Actions on Processed Critical Minerals and Derivative Products."⁵² This E.O. directs the Secretary of Commerce to investigate the economic and national security impacts of importing processed critical minerals, like copper, including by estimating the dollar value of processed imports.⁵³

In response to these directives, the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) has moved expeditiously to bring new production online by streamlining mine permitting and issuing

⁴⁷ Copper Development Association, "Economic Impact - \$160B Role in the U.S. Economy," <https://copper.org/economy/>.

⁴⁸ Executive Order 14154, "Unleashing American Energy," The White House, January 20, 2025, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/unleashing-american-energy/>.

⁴⁹ Executive Order 14241, "Immediate Measures to Increase American Mineral Production," The White House, March 20, 2025 <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/03/immediate-measures-to-increase-american-mineral-production/>.

⁵⁰ *Id.*

⁵¹ *Id.*

⁵² Executive Order 14272, "Ensuring National Security and Economic Resilience Through Section 232 Actions on Processed Critical Minerals and Derivative Products," The White House, April 15, 2025, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/04/ensuring-national-security-and-economic-resilience-through-section-232-actions-on-processed-critical-minerals-and-derivative-products/>.

⁵³ *Id.*

approvals for key projects. For example, on October 23, 2025, the Bureau of Land Management reissued the necessary right of way permits for the establishment of Alaska’s Ambler Road Project⁵⁴—which will provide access to one of the world’s highest-grade copper deposits.⁵⁵ More recently, on March 16, 2026, the U.S. Forest Service completed a federal land exchange with the Resolution Copper Mine,⁵⁶ which has potential to supply up to 25 percent of America’s copper demand for the next 50 years.⁵⁷

Building on President Trump’s efforts, House Republicans have advanced critical legislative reforms in the 119th Congress to cut red tape and expand access to domestic copper resources:

- H.R. 4090, the “Critical Mineral Dominance Act,” introduced by Representative Pete Stauber (R-MN-08), codifies provisions of three of President Trump’s E.O.s by directing DOI to revise or rescind agency actions that inhibit domestic mining, identify and expedite the permitting of existing mines on public lands, identify public lands with mineral potential, increase geological mapping on public lands, and submit a report to Congress detailing the barriers to U.S. mining along with recommended changes to law.⁵⁸
- H.R. 4776, the “Standardizing Permitting and Expediting Economic Development (SPEED) Act,” introduced by Chairman Westerman (R-AR-04) and Representative Golden (D-ME-02), modernizes the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) to address statutory flaws that have resulted in lengthy permitting timelines and increased frivolous litigation.
- H.J. Res 140, a Congressional Review Act resolution introduced by Representative Pete Stauber (R-MN-08), permanently rescinds the Biden Administration’s irresponsible withdrawal of over 225,000 acres of federal land in Minnesota’s Superior National Forest—which hosts 34 percent of the U.S.’s total copper reserves.⁵⁹
- H.R. 1366, the “Mining Regulatory Clarity Act,” introduced by Representative Mark Amodei (R-NV-02), restores regulatory certainty for ancillary operations vital to copper mining, which were threatened by the Ninth Circuit’s misguided “Rosemont Decision” in 2022. The bill also creates an “Abandoned Hardrock Mine Fund” to support the reclamation program by using claim maintenance fees to inventory, assess, and remediate abandoned hardrock mine lands.⁶⁰
- H.R. 1501, the “Protecting Domestic Mining Act of 2025,” introduced by Representative Jefferson Shreve (R-IN-06), codifies mining and mineral processing as covered sectors under the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. The bill also prohibits implementation of a Biden-era proposed rule that would have narrowed FAST-41

⁵⁴ Department of the Interior, “Interior Takes Bold Steps to Expand Energy, Local Control and Land Access in Alaska,” October 23, 2025, <https://www.doi.gov/pressreleases/interior-takes-bold-steps-expand-energy-local-control-and-land-access-alaska>.

⁵⁵ Ambler Metals, “Arctic Deposit,” <https://www.amblermetals.com/arctic>.

⁵⁶ Resolution Copper, “United States Forest Service and Resolution Copper Complete Land Exchange,” March 16, 2026, <https://resolutioncopper.com/united-states-forest-service-and-resolution-copper-complete-land-exchange/>.

⁵⁷ Department of the Interior, “Secretary Burgum Urges Action on Resolution Copper Project After Ninth Circuit Stay,” August 29, 2025, <https://www.doi.gov/pressreleases/secretary-burgum-urges-action-resolution-copper-project-after-ninth-circuit-stay>.

⁵⁸ *Id.*

⁵⁹ House Natural Resources Committee Press Release, “House Votes to Unleash American Mineral Wealth,” January 21, 2026, <https://naturalresources.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=418567>.

⁶⁰ House Natural Resources Press Release, “Legislation to Unleash American Mineral Resources Passes House,” December 18, 2025, <https://naturalresources.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=418525>.

coverage for mining projects, severely impeding domestic mineral investment and resource independence.⁶¹

- H.R. 5929, the “Critical Minerals Supply Chain Resiliency Act,” led by Representative Andy Barr (R-KY-06), adds actions authorized under the Defense Production Act of 1950 to the list of projects eligible for expedited permitting under FAST-41.⁶²

⁶¹ House Natural Resources Press Release, “Committee Advances Legislation to Unleash Resources, Suppress Illegal Fishing and Protect Battlefields,” April 21, 2026, <https://naturalresources.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=418714>.

⁶² *Id.*