



March 23, 2021

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary of Agriculture
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

For more than four decades, key business organizations in Arizona including the Arizona Chamber of Commerce, Greater Phoenix Economic Council, Valley Partnership and Greater Phoenix Leadership among others have made it our mission to improve the greater Phoenix area and the State of Arizona by bringing together talent, resources and leadership to create action on priority issues. We represent Arizona business leaders and their employees across a diverse range of industries. Together, we work to advance initiatives, public policy and projects that will strengthen the future of Arizona.

We are writing to express our concern over the USDA's recent decision to rescind the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Draft Record of Decision from the Resolution Copper project near Superior, AZ after years of thorough, independent, meaningful public consultation by the Forest Service that started in the Obama Administration. This decision now unnecessarily delays significant benefits the project would bring to citizens in our region after they participated in good faith along with the Forest Service and almost a dozen other taxpayer funded federal and state agencies. The USDA has undermined the good work by the career-level staff within the Forest Service and tells every member of the public their time and effort was wasted. The decision to rescind the Final EIS will have a chilling effect on future decisions by businesses to invest in our state.

As you know, Resolution Copper is developing one of the world's most significant untapped domestic sources of copper in Arizona's Copper Triangle, an area with a long and rich history of mining. It is one of the single largest private investments in Arizona's history.

This project is a crucial part of America's clean energy future. Once in operation, the mine could supply up to one-quarter of the nation's copper demand. That's vital fuel for American innovation. Copper is an essential component in electric vehicles, battery storage, wind turbines, solar panels and other clean energy technologies.

With demand for copper growing exponentially worldwide, the Resolution Copper project will bring enormous economic benefits to our state at a time when we need such investment more than ever to rebound from the severely negative economic impacts of COVID-19. The mine will employ about 1,500 workers and will pay approximately \$134 million per year in total compensation when fully operational, primarily to a workforce that lives within 40 miles of the project. The project will also generate an estimated 2,200 additional indirect jobs. And it has won strong support from local labor leaders. All told, Resolution

Copper could contribute \$1 billion in economic value for Arizona annually over the project's 60-year estimated life. It will boost state and local tax revenues by between \$88 million and \$113 million each year of operations, while the federal government could see an extra \$200 million in tax revenues per year.

As leaders from some of Arizona's most prominent companies, we know what factors into decisions about whether or not to invest in a state. That is why we are so troubled by the USDA's last-minute decision concerning Resolution Copper, which the agency did without consultation with local leaders and communities.

After all, legislation to facilitate the land exchange between the Tonto National Forest and Resolution Copper passed Congress with bipartisan support in December 2014 and was signed into law by President Obama. The Final EIS issued by the Forest Service in January reflects a decade of formal consultation with Native American tribes and community stakeholders. It outlines detailed plans to address and mitigate community concerns about the project's impact, while delivering lasting benefits to the region.

The federal permitting process was nearly unprecedented in both its scope and its length. Entrenched voices of opposition who routinely oppose any and all development have been heard. Their voices, however, should not cast permanent doubts about this future investment in our state. Arizona is a state that relies so heavily upon mining, when it is required that businesses submit to lengthy and complex federal permitting and EIS review processes, then we must ensure that process is followed and respected.

Now is not the time to play politics with Arizona's economic future. We urge you to review the facts, reaffirm trust in the extensive independent EIS process and allow the Resolution Copper project to move forward so that all Arizona citizens may realize the benefits.

Sincerely,

ARIZONA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY



Garrick Taylor
Interim President & CEO

GREATER PHOENIX ECONOMIC COUNCIL



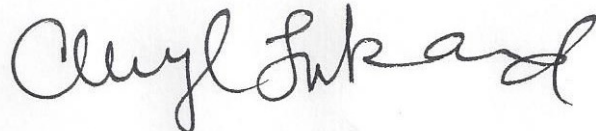
Chris Camacho
President & CEO

GREATER PHOENIX LEADERSHIP



Neil Giuliano
President & CEO

VALLEY PARTNERSHIP



Cheryl Lombard
President & CEO

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cc: The Honorable Ron Klain
The Honorable Robert Bonnie
The Honorable Kyrsten Sinema
The Honorable Mark Kelly
The Honorable Ruben Gallego
The Honorable Tom O'Halleran
The Honorable Ann Kirkpatrick
The Honorable Greg Stanton