



Transmitted via Electronic/Email To:

Leah Schaefer: Leah_Schaefer@energy.senate.gov

May 10, 2023

The Honorable John Barrasso
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: Support for the Spur Permitting of Undeveloped Resources Act

Dear Ranking Member Barrasso:

The Women's Mining Coalition (WMC) thanks you for your leadership in introducing the Spur Permitting for Undeveloped Resources Act (the SPUR Act), S. 1456. As you and your numerous cosponsors have recognized, permitting delays are harming every aspect of our economy and threaten our energy and national security. The SPUR Act effectively addresses the urgent need to streamline the permitting process.

The SPUR Act would eliminate the significant barriers that the protracted, costly, and uncertain federal permitting process currently creates. As you know, the burdensome permitting process is thwarting the timely development of U.S. mineral, coal, oil, and gas resources and has curtailed our ability to build new transmission lines and other types of infrastructure projects. Without solving the permitting problem, the country's 2030 and 2050 energy transition deadlines to reduce carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions are unachievable and completely unrealistic.

WMC supports the significant National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) streamlining measures in the SPUR Act that mandate that Environmental Assessments be completed within one year and Environment Impact Statements be completed within two years. Many of our members have extensive experience with the NEPA process and are confident that efficiencies can shorten agency timelines to produce thorough NEPA documents while still encouraging public participation and examining alternatives to minimize environmental impacts.

WMC especially appreciates the Title II, Minerals and Leasing and Permitting, directives that:

- Amend Section 40206 of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs act to expand the directives pertaining to critical minerals to all minerals that are locatable under the U.S. Mining Law (30 U.S.C. § 22 *et seq.*) and that are located on lands acquired by the U.S. pursuant to the Mineral Leasing Act of Acquired Lands 30 U.S.C. § 351);
- Clarify that the U.S. Mining Law authorizes the use of mining claims for mining and all mining-related purposes regardless of whether the claim contains valuable minerals. This provision will eliminate the uncertainties stemming from the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals May 2022 opinion in the Rosemont litigation;

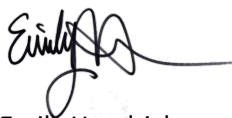
- Prohibit the Department of the Interior (DOI) from rescinding leases, permits, or claims and forbid DOI from establishing moratoria on issuing leases, permits, and claims for mining projects on federal lands; (like the Superior National Forest withdrawal in Minnesota);
- Require Congress to approve the Secretary of the Interior's proposed mineral withdrawals larger than 5,000 acres;
- Require BLM to evaluate the minerals present on federal lands in updates of land use plans;
- Direct BLM to lift the 2016 leasing moratorium for thermal coal and require the DOI Secretary to offer lands for coal leasing within 90 days of a request by an applicant and to complete the fair market value assessment within 45 days;
- Make uranium a critical mineral;
- Direct the U.S. Geological Survey to consider projected declines in U.S. production of a mineral when evaluating whether a mineral should be considered a critical mineral.

WMC would like to emphasize our support for the mandate in Title IV, Section 4005 that requires the Director of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to withdraw BLM's "Conservation and Land Health" proposed rule. This rule is an improper attempt to use the rulemaking process to amend the Federal Land Management and Policy Act of 1976 to dramatically limit responsible multiple uses of BLM-administered lands.

WMC is a grassroots organization whose mission is to advocate for today's modern domestic mining industry, which is essential to our Nation. Our membership includes over 200 women who work nationwide in hardrock, coal, and industrial minerals mining and in the energy, manufacturing, transportation, and service industry sectors.

Thank you again for your leadership and vision. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be helpful in advancing S. 1456.

Sincerely yours,



Emily Hendrickson
WMC President



Wanda Burget
WMC Manager