



United States Senate Committee on

Energy & Natural Resources



Senator Lisa Murkowski, Alaska, *Chairman*

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Sen. Murkowski Introduces Legislation to Strengthen America's Mineral Security

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Sen. Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, today introduced the *American Mineral Security Act of 2015*, to prevent future mineral supply shocks and boost the competitiveness of our energy, defense, electronics, medical, and manufacturing industries.

“Minerals are critical to every aspect of our daily lives. We rely on them for everything we do and everything we make – from our smallest computer chips to our newest energy technologies to our most advanced defense systems,” Murkowski said. “Despite this, as highlighted just this weekend by *60 Minutes*, we are alarmingly dependent on foreign sources for dozens of minerals. Instead of ignoring this situation as it grows worse, my bill offers a chance to change course. It would improve our mineral security and protect our manufacturers for decades to come.”

According to the [National Academy of Sciences](#), more than 25,000 pounds of new minerals are needed per person, per year in the United States to make the items we use for basic human needs, infrastructure, energy, transportation, communications, and defense. Yet the [U.S. Geological Survey](#) (USGS) reports that America is more than 50 percent dependent on foreign nations for at least 43 separate mineral commodities, and a [recent survey](#) of manufacturing executives found that more than 90 percent worry about “supply disruptions outside of their control.”

Murkowski’s bill is an update of her previous legislation on this subject. It would revitalize the United States’ minerals supply chain and help reduce our dependence on foreign suppliers. To accomplish this, the bill requires the Director of the USGS to establish a list of minerals critical to the American economy and provides a comprehensive set of policies to address issues associated with their discovery, production, use, and re-use.

To improve the efficiency of the notoriously slow federal permitting process for new mines, the *American Mineral Security Act* includes a series of reasonable steps to reduce delays and ensure timely decisions. The seven to 10 years it currently takes to approve a new mine in the United States is often singled out as a [serious liability](#) for our competitiveness and ability to draw investment.

Murkowski introduced her bill today to renew the conversation about America’s foreign mineral dependence within the Senate. She looks forward to discussing the bill with her colleagues in the weeks ahead, and plans to hold a legislative hearing on it this spring.

Summary of the American Mineral Security Act of 2015

101. Policy – Articulates a modern statement of mineral policy for the United States to reflect the needs and challenges of the 21st century.

102. Designations – Establishes a methodology for the designation of critical minerals, based on potential supply disruptions and the importance of their use, and requires the list to be reviewed and updated at least every two years.

103. Resource Assessments – In coordination with state geological surveys, requires USGS to identify and quantify critical mineral resources throughout the United States within four years.

104. Permitting – Outlines a series of practical actions and requirements for the Department of the Interior and Department of Agriculture (Forest Service) to reduce delays in the federal permitting process for new mines.

105. Application of Executive Order – Applies an Executive Order issued by President Obama in 2012, regarding the permitting of important infrastructure projects, to mines that will produce critical minerals and critical mineral manufacturing projects.

106. Federal Register Process – Requires Federal Register notices to be prepared at an agency's organizational level, and for Departmental review to be completed within 45 days.

107. Recycling, Efficiency, and Alternatives – Authorizes the Department of Energy to continue to administer a program for these purposes to promote supplemental or substitute critical mineral supplies.

108. Analysis and Forecasting – Builds upon existing capabilities to establish a forecasting capability for critical mineral reliance, production, price, recycling, and related factors.

109. Education and Workforce – Provides for workforce assessments, curriculum development, and programs related to critical minerals at institutions of higher education.

The *American Mineral Security Act* does not authorize any new spending at this time. Senator Murkowski is fully committed to offsetting any costs that are ultimately justified and included for its various provisions. The full text of the bill is available on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee's website.

Full bill text and more information on the American Mineral Security Act of 2015 is available on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee [website](#).

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