



October 2, 2024

Senator John Hickenlooper  
374 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Thom Tillis  
113 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Hickenlooper and Tillis,

On behalf of Chamber of Progress – a tech industry coalition promoting technology’s progressive future – I write in support of your recently introduced bipartisan legislation: the *National Critical Minerals Council Act* and the *Unearth Innovation Act*. These bills will secure critical minerals for our economy and national security, and help reduce costs for Americans by supporting domestic production of green energy and everyday goods.

### **Reducing costs for families and businesses**

One of the most pressing issues facing Americans today is the rising cost of living, and these bills can help reduce these pressures. Energy is a big cost component for families, comprising 7% of the Consumer Price Index.<sup>1</sup> By developing a coordinated approach to mining and mineral research in the U.S., your legislation will help ensure a stable supply of critical materials and drive down costs for industries and consumers alike.

Over the last several years, disruptions in the supply chain of critical minerals have led to shortages and price spikes in multiple sectors, from electric vehicles to renewable energy infrastructure. Ensuring that the U.S. deploys a comprehensive strategy for mineral supply will reduce the risks of such spikes over the long term.

By supporting R&D throughout the mining value chain, the *Unearth Innovation Act* will also spur innovation that can reduce the cost of collecting, processing, or recycling minerals, while reducing environmental and community impacts.

### **Restoring American leadership and advancing sustainability in critical minerals**

The abundant green energy future we want relies on minerals like lithium, cobalt, terbium, niobium, among others. We have the opportunity to lead in creating this future.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/cpi.pdf>

As recently as 1990, we were the largest producer of critical minerals in the world.<sup>2</sup> Restoring American leadership in minerals will reduce reliance on foreign adversaries, particularly China, which currently controls 73% of the world's cobalt processing, 68% of nickel, 59% of lithium, and a substantial portion of rare earth elements.<sup>3</sup>

This dependency not only leaves the U.S. vulnerable to supply disruptions but also props up environmentally harmful practices abroad. By encouraging domestic mining and coordination between federal agencies, your legislation will help the U.S. lead on critical minerals.

The *Unearth Innovation Act* also emphasizes the importance of minimizing the environmental impact of domestic mineral production. The bill's focus on advancing technologies for recycling, mine reclamation, and sustainable mining practices will allow the U.S. to produce minerals in a way that benefits the economy without sacrificing the environment.

### **Growing the economy and meeting the demand for clean energy**

This legislation will also be a powerful driver of economic growth, particularly as energy demand rises. By supplying the minerals needed for long-duration battery energy storage to complement renewables, these bills legislation would help make 24/7 clean energy possible and economically competitive. The legislation's emphasis on domestic production will also create many new jobs in the U.S.

With the demand for clean energy steadily increasing, this can help the U.S. to remain competitive as we bring new technology centers and manufacturing facilities online. In 2017, data centers needed nine gigawatts of electricity. By 2029, they are expected to need 32 gigawatts.<sup>4</sup>

We look forward to supporting your efforts to advance this important legislation.

Sincerely,



Adam Kovacevich  
Founder & CEO  
Chamber of Progress

---

2

<https://www.kiteandkeymedia.com/videos/the-truth-about-mining-rare-earth-minerals-and-clean-renewable-energy/>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/LTRC\\_ChinaSupplyChain.pdf](https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/LTRC_ChinaSupplyChain.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2024/03/07/ai-data-centers-power/>