



Committee: House Natural Resources Committee
Event: [Full Committee Markup](#)
Date: September 17, 2025
Time: 10:00 AM
Place: 1324 Longworth House Office Building

Member Tophlines:

[Chair Bruce Westerman \(R-AR-04\)](#): Westerman emphasized the need for certainty and clarity in the federal permitting process. He argued that the U.S. must end its reliance on foreign sources of critical minerals and materials, and he specifically spoke in support of Rep. **Mark Amodei's** (R-NV-02) H.R. 1366 and Rep. **Pete Stauber's** (R-MN-08) H.R. 4090.

[Ranking Member Jared Huffman \(D-CA-02\)](#): Huffman argued that Republicans are attempting to put the *National Environmental Policy Act* (NEPA) “out to pasture” by arguing it is an old law. He contended that if Congress is focused specifically on reforming laws based on their age, the Committee must consider reforming the *Mining Law of 1872*. He claimed that the U.S. “cannot mine its way to security,” and he criticized multinational mining corporations that are attempting to drain the U.S. of its resources. He argued that his GOP colleagues are reliant on “handouts” from the mining industry, and he contended that many energy and battery resources can be made without critical minerals. He also criticized recent federal investments in mineral development, and he called the legislation before the Committee a “mining free-for-all.”

Legislation Considered:

- I. [H.R. 4090](#) – To codify certain provisions of certain Executive Orders relating to domestic mining and hardrock mineral resources, and for other purposes.
 - A. Stauber argued that H.R. 4090 will do three things: (1) mandate a new study on the cost of U.S. mineral import reliance; (2) expedite priority mining projects on federal lands and increase geological mapping; and (3) rescind regulations that inhibit mineral exploration and development. Westerman also spoke in strong support of H.R. 4090.
 - B. Huffman contended that this legislation confuses the mining industry’s interests with the American public’s interests. He emphasized that the removal of environmental considerations or other regulations that impede mineral development will harm the public, and he criticized his GOP colleagues for capitulating to foreign-owned mineral conglomerates.
 - C. Rep. **Paul Gosar** (R-AZ-04) discussed the excessive timeline and immense costs associated with litigation against Resolution Copper, and he emphasized that there are additional copper projects up and coming in Kingman, Arizona, with permitting timelines set for completion as early as the end of this year. He contended that Democrats are entirely opposed to mineral development, and he

emphasized the importance of supporting the responsible and innovative copper projects underway in his district.

- D. Rep. **Nick Begich** (R-AK-At Large) also emphasized the importance of minerals for energy technologies for data centers and artificial intelligence infrastructure.

II. Amendments to H.R. 4090

- A. Stauber 26 ANS – Titles the bill the “Critical Mineral Dominance Act” and makes small technical changes proposed by the Bureau of Land Management.

1. The amendment was agreed to on a voice vote.

- B. Huffman 1 – Adds “to minimize impacts to communities and the environment” to the opening section on policy. Adds that, when the Secretary proposes regulations to rescind, the list specifically focuses on minerals important for economic development. Strikes the text that supports expedited approvals of these mineral projects. Adds that identified lands for potential development must also have the least impact on Tribal communities and the environment.

1. Stauber got into an argument with Huffman and Rep. **Teresa Leger Fernandez** (D-NM-02) over whether or not Democrats oppose domestic mineral development entirely.

a) Stauber and Leger Fernandez came to an agreement on the idea that foreign nations should never control our nation’s defense capabilities. However, Huffman argued that Chinese-owned mining companies should not be able to take American resources, refine them abroad, and sell the processed minerals in the international market. He argued that the U.S. needs to protect our competitive advantage against adversaries.

b) Stauber emphasized his belief that the U.S. can be dominant in the critical minerals space.

2. Gosar emphasized that there are not many American mining companies anymore, largely because of historic regulations that have disincentivized investments and production in American mineral projects. He emphasized the lack of domestic processing facilities as well, noting that the copper mine in his district is using new technologies because they were unable to smelter in Kennecott. He alluded to an American-Australian owned copper project in his district, but he emphasized the need to work with companies internationally until the domestic industry is built up.

3. Gosar asked Huffman about his opposition to gold being considered a critical mineral.

a) Huffman argued that if everything is critical, then nothing is critical.

4. Leger Fernandez discussed the role of historic mine cleanup in New Mexico.

5. A recorded vote was requested on this amendment. The amendment failed on a vote of 17-23.

- C. Leger Fernandez 2 – Prohibits the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture (DOI, USDA) from expediting mining operations if a project is owned or operated by a foreign entity of concern (FEOC) or a FEOC subsidiary.

1. Westerman expressed opposition to this amendment, but noted his support for the overall sentiment opposing majority-owned Chinese companies from owning American mineral resources. He argued that Congress has already worked out the definition of ownership percentages for FEOCs, and he contended that determining this standard is a responsibility of the House Financial Services Committee.
 2. Rep. **Melanie Stansbury** (D-NM-01) contended that copper should not be considered a critical mineral, as the U.S. is a net exporter of copper. She argued that increased production would cause irreparable damage to American communities, noting that Oak Flat in particular is at risk. She also recalled that the Secretary of the Interior was at the White House on the same day that the Supreme Court of the United States was ruling on the Oak Flat decision, and she contended that the President is supporting his “friends,” as exemplified by his Truth Social post that day. She expressed strong opposition to H.R. 4090.
 3. Stauber emphasized that independent agencies, such as the Committee on Foreign Investment in the U.S., are in place to determine whether investments by companies with partial foreign ownership are to the detriment of the American economy. He contended that the Biden Administration is responsible for the historic lack of FEOC standards, arguing that his colleagues should have been equally as concerned about foreign influence during the passage of the *Inflation Reduction Act*. He contended that his colleagues are more interested in “exporting their environmental guilt,” and he sharply criticized the Biden Administration’s investments in nickel projects in Indonesia that are owned by the Chinese government.
 4. Huffman argued that the 10 percent threshold originates from Chair **John Moolenaar’s** (R-MI-02) work on the House Select Committee on the Chinese Communist Party.
 5. Huffman introduced a unanimous consent request to enter portions of the Trump Administration’s Resolution Copper final environmental impact statement (FEIS), which notes that Oak Flat is on the National Register of Historic Places. He also countered that according to the FEIS, Resolution Copper will develop a pit during year six of operations, which he argued is not strip mining, as Gosar mentioned earlier.
 6. A recorded vote was requested on this amendment. The amendment failed on a vote of 18-24.
- D. Rivas 3 – Mandates that DOI and USDA must create a notice and public comment period for environmental justice communities on any agency actions that intend to suspend, revise, or rescind existing regulations.
1. Gosar expressed opposition to this amendment, arguing this amendment would undermine the legislation’s overall goal. Leger Fernandez argued that this amendment would simply allow local input.
 - a) Rep. **Luz Rivas** (D-CA-29) agreed, noting that the input from communities may also be supportive of energy and resource development in these communities.

2. A recorded vote was requested on this amendment. The amendment failed on a vote of 18-24.
- E. Elfreth 6 – Adds language to require a report on how the federal government is incentivizing hardrock mineral recovery from coal ash.
 1. Westerman and Huffman expressed support for the amendment. Stauber also rose in support of the amendment, arguing it would strengthen the underlying bill and embrace the new technologies in the mining industry.
 2. The amendment was agreed to on a voice vote.
- F. Randall 4 – Reinstates the Biden-era standard of notifying Tribal communities of any nearby minerals exploration process.
 1. Rep. **Emily Randall** (D-WA-06) quoted **Rich Nolan**, CEO of the National Mining Association, who expressed support for Tribal consultation throughout the development of a mineral project in a previous hearing. However, Randall agreed to withdraw this amendment.
- G. Ansari 5 – Directs the Secretary of the Interior to report to Congress on the barriers to byproduct production on federal land.
 1. Rep. **Yassamin Ansari** (D-AZ-03) cited a recent study conducted by the Colorado School of Mines, and she argued that the reporting by DOI will enable Congress to address barriers to mineral byproduct production on federal lands in a bipartisan manner.
 2. Westerman and Stauber expressed support for the amendment. Westerman noted this amendment would also require the Secretary to identify proactive solutions to the barriers.
 3. The amendment was agreed to on a voice vote.
- III. Final Vote on H.R. 4090: Passed out of Committee on a vote of 26-16.
 - A. Yeas: Bentz; Begich; Boebert; Collins; Crank; Ezell; Fulcher; Gosar; Hageman; Hunt; Hurd; Kennedy; Kiggans; LaMalfa; Maloy; McClintock; McDowell; Radewagen; Stauber; Tiffany; Walberg; Webster; Westerman; Wittman; Golden; Lee
 - B. Nays: Ansari; Brownley; Dexter; Dingell; Elfreth; Hernandez; Hoyle; Huffman; Leger Fernandez; Magaziner; Min; Randall; Rivas; Soto; Stansbury; Velazquez
 - C. No Vote: Amodei; Gray; Neguse
- IV. [H.R. 1366](#) – Mining Regulatory Clarity Act of 2025
 - A. Huffman expressed strong opposition to H.R. 1366. He expressed support for the Rosemont decision, and he classified the *Mining Law of 1872* as “antiquated” and argued it gives subsidies to “foreign-controlled mining companies.” He contended that industry just wants to use mill site claims for unlimited mine waste dumping, and he argued that no existing mineral projects are being held up as a result of the Rosemont decision.
 - B. Stauber expressed strong support for H.R. 1366, which he highlighted as a bipartisan and bicameral bill. He argued that the legislation provides certainty and regulatory durability for the mining industry, and he argued that there is nothing preventing the Solicitor of the Interior, or any future solicitors, from undoing the Rosemont fix. He argued that codification of the fix in law is required to ensure the longstanding interpretation of the *Mining Law of 1872* and agency interpretations of such rules support domestic mineral development.

- C. Westerman also expressed strong support for the legislation, noting that increasing projected demand for mineral products will require responsible development to increase in the U.S.
- V. Amendments to H.R. 1366
 - A. Amodei 20 ANS – Changes the date on the bill text to account for its passage last Congress.
 - 1. The amendment was agreed to on a voice vote.
 - B. Huffman 3 – Strikes the definition of operations in the bill text.
 - 1. Westerman opposed the amendment, arguing that the definition of operations in the text are consistent with DOI definitions.
 - 2. The amendment was not agreed to on a voice vote.
 - C. Lee 1 – Clarifies that mining companies may only hold as many mill sites only as are necessary for waste rock tailings and other operations. It removes the word “reasonably” from the bill, and it states that companies may only hold public lands in accordance with a mining plan of operations. It also clarifies in the savings clause that nothing limits the government’s ability to regulate mining activities on protected lands or lands open to mining.
 - 1. Westerman opposed the amendment. He disagreed with Lee’s concern that the underlying bill would allow bad actors to abuse mill site claims.
 - 2. A recorded vote was requested on this amendment. The amendment failed on a vote of 17-25.
 - D. Huffman 2 – Raises claim maintenance fees for mill sites of \$400 per site, up from \$200 for five acres. It asks for \$80 per acre, up from \$40. It also directs all excess claim maintenance fees to the Abandoned Hardrock Mine Fund, and it puts a permanent end to patenting.
 - 1. Ansari, who introduced this amendment on Huffman’s behalf, withdrew the amendment.
- VI. Final Vote on H.R. 1366: Passed out of Committee on a vote of 25-17.
 - A. Yeas: Bentz; Begich; Boebert; Collins; Crank; Ezell; Fulcher; Gosar; Hageman; Hunt; Hurd; Kennedy; Kiggans; LaMalfa; Maloy; McClintock; McDowell; Radewagen; Stauber; Tiffany; Walberg; Webster; Westerman; Wittman; Golden
 - B. Nays: Ansari; Brownley; Dexter; Dingell; Elfleth; Hernandez; Hoyle; Huffman; Lee; Leger Fernandez; Magaziner; Min; Randall; Rivas; Soto; Stansbury; Velazquez
 - C. No Vote: Amodei; Gray; Neguse
- VII. The remainder of the bills before the Committee were considered in a single unanimous consent motion based on a bipartisan agreement. Westerman noted that the legislation considered within the unanimous consent motion may include some amendments that were agreed to in backdoor negotiations with the Minority. The legislation included in this motion is as follows:
 - A. [H.R. 2306](#) – The Adams Memorial-Great American Heroes Act
 - B. [H.R. 2815](#) – Cape Fox Land Entitlement Finalization Act of 2025
 - C. [H.R. 2916](#) – To authorize, ratify, and confirm the Agreement of Settlement and Compromise to Resolve the Akwesasne Mohawk Land Claim in the State of New York, and for other purposes.
 - D. [H.R. 3692](#) – To reauthorize the Young Fishermen’s Development Act.
 - E. [H.R. 3872](#) – MERICA Act

F. [H.R. 4256](#) – Digital Coast Reauthorization Act of 2025