



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Aug. 27, 2025

U.S. House Natural Resources Committee, Alaska mining leaders discuss permitting, reforms at Anchorage roundtable

ANCHORAGE, Alaska – Members of the U.S. House Committee on Natural Resources met with Alaska mining industry leaders Wednesday morning in Anchorage to discuss federal permitting challenges, proposed reforms and the state’s role in supplying the nation with critical minerals. The roundtable brought together 11 members of the Committee, notably including:

- Chairman Rep. Bruce Westerman, R-Ark.
- Vice Chairman Rep. Rob Wittman, R-Va.
- Rep. Nick Begich, R-Alaska, vice chairman of the Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources.

Participants included representatives of Alaska Miners Association member companies and organizations such as Alaska Energy Metals, Donlin Gold, Ambler Metals, Pebble Partnership, Hecla Mining, Graphite One Resources, Usibelli Coal Mine and Contango ORE, as well as the Alaska Division of Geological and Geophysical Surveys.

“Alaska holds some of the world’s most important mineral deposits, but federal permitting remains a big obstacle to putting these resources to work,” said Deantha Skibinski, executive director of the Alaska Miners Association. “We are grateful to Chairman Westerman and the Natural Resources Committee for making the trip to Alaska to hear directly from Alaska’s mining industry leaders about the real-world impacts of these policies and how reforms can unlock opportunity for Alaska and the nation.”

The event opened with an overview of Alaska’s mineral production and potential from the Alaska Division of Geological and Geophysical Surveys, followed by dialogue between Committee members and industry leaders.

The discussion focused on the bipartisan SPEED Act, legislation introduced earlier this summer to reform the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and streamline the permitting process for energy and mineral projects. Mining leaders shared how bureaucratic slow rolling and uncertainty in federal permitting negatively impacts investment and delays development.

Alaska is home to world-class deposits of gold, zinc, silver, lead and coal, as well as emerging critical minerals like graphite, rare earth elements, cobalt and nickel. These resources are essential for technologies ranging from renewable energy and electric vehicles to national defense and medical devices. Alaska is already one of the world’s leading producers of zinc and



has the potential to play a greater role in reducing U.S. reliance on foreign mineral supply chains. **(Note: see attached map.)**

Committee visits of this scale are rare in Alaska, making the Anchorage roundtable a significant opportunity for mining leaders to speak directly with lawmakers about the state's unique opportunities and challenges. With multiple subcommittee chairs present, the meeting allowed Alaskans to highlight how federal permitting decisions affect local projects and the broader effort to strengthen U.S. supply chains for renewable energy, defense, and technology.

Committee members will meet with state and local officials and deliver keynote remarks at the Alaska Oil and Gas Association's annual conference while in state.

Quotes from Committee Members at the roundtable:

Rep. Nick Begich, Alaska: "Alaska has more mineral wealth than any other state in the country. We also have greater oil and gas potential than anywhere else in the nation. Too often, there is a lack of understanding about how responsibly and effectively we manage these resources in our state. We are here to showcase that, to listen to concerns, and to highlight the opportunities. I know about them, but I want my friends and colleagues from the Lower 48 to learn how Alaska can contribute to solving many of the challenges we face when it comes to raw materials, rare earths, critical minerals, base metals, and even precious metals."

Rep. Pete Stauber, Minnesota: "We are 3,370 miles from Washington, D.C.—a long way from the capital, but our hearts are here in Alaska. That is why we plan to continue coming here, learning as much as we can, as often as we can. Strategically, Alaska is one of the most important states for our nation, with its vocation, minerals, land, and natural resource assets."

Rep. Rob Wittman, Virginia: "Alaska ought to be the shining example about how we can do it better than anybody else on the face of the earth. We will do more to protect and take care of our workers than anybody on the planet. We do more to take care of our environment than anybody on the planet. And when we buy a single ounce of those materials from China, we are enabling them to use forced labor to destroy environments elsewhere around the world."

About the Alaska Miners Association

AMA is a professional membership trade organization established in 1939 to represent the mining industry in Alaska. AMA's more than 1,400 members come from eight statewide branches: Anchorage, Denali, Fairbanks, Haines, Juneau, Kenai, Ketchikan/Prince of Wales, and Nome. Alaska's miners are individual prospectors, geologists, engineers, suction dredge miners, small family mines, junior mining companies, major mining companies, Alaska Native Corporations, and the contracting sector that supports Alaska's mining industry.

Media contact: Deantha Skibinski, (907)317-6323 or deantha@alaskaminers.org