

July 7, 2011

The Honorable Doc Hastings
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Hastings,

The Society for Mining, Metallurgy and Exploration (SME) is writing to offer our support for Congressman Coffman's *Rare Earth Policy Task Force and Materials Act* (H.R. 2184). SME is an international society of professionals in the mining and minerals industry. The SME membership is more than 13,000 strong, with members in nearly 100 countries.

H.R. 2184 requires the Department of the Interior to establish a government-wide task force to review and report back on all U.S. laws, regulations or policies that discourage and delay the reestablishment of a domestic rare earth industry. It also calls for a comprehensive plan for research, development, demonstration, and commercial application to ensure the long-term, secure, and sustainable supply of rare earth materials for the United States. In addition, the plan includes proposals on how to promote recycling possibilities and alternative materials that could act as substitutes. The measure is also part of Mr. Coffman's *RESTART Act of 2011*, which was introduced earlier this year.

SME is pleased that Mr. Coffman's bill adds the necessary focus on government activities that discourage rare earth minerals development and investment that is missing from Congressman Doug Lamborn's earlier bill, *National Strategic and Critical Minerals Policy Act of 2011* (H.R. 2011). Further, SME would support critical minerals bills, such as H.R. 2184, that reference consultation with professional and technical societies in developing the government R&D plans for these critical minerals.

SME supports efforts of the House Natural Resources Committee to rapidly establish a viable domestic rare earths minerals production industry to help secure the Nation's clean energy future, reduce the U.S. vulnerability to material shortages related to national defense, and to maintain our global technical and economic competitiveness.

Please contact me if I can provide any additional information.

Sincerely,



David L. Kanagy, CAE
Executive Director