

August 15, 2014

Mr. Cyrus Wadia
Office of Science and Technology Policy
Eisenhower Executive Office Building
1650 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20504

OSTP 7-22-14 Request for Information

Dear Mr. Wadia,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written comments on critical and strategic materials supply chains and their importance to American prosperity and national security.

The Society for Mining, Metallurgy and Exploration (SME) is a professional society (nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation) whose 15,500 members represent all professionals serving the minerals industry in more than 100 countries. SME members are engineers, geologists, metallurgists, educators, students and researchers. SME advances the worldwide minerals community through information exchange and professional development.

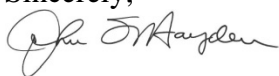
SME's comments focus on the role of maintaining an adequate pipeline of qualified graduates and teachers at U.S. universities in order to provide the necessary technical skills needed to maintain the supply chain of critical and strategic minerals.

Mining and geological engineering, mineral processing, extractive metallurgy and applied geology and geophysics programs at our universities are national assets that are critical to maintain and encourage the growth of the U.S. energy and minerals workforce. These programs suffer from dwindling federal reinvestment and R&D funding. Without an adequate pipeline of qualified graduates and faculty at U.S. universities, the nation is at a distinct competitive disadvantage in the production of basic raw materials and energy. Workforce availability has become a significant problem for the domestic mining industries.

SME's position on this issue is reflected in the attached technical briefing paper issued by SME in March of 2013, "Federal Support for U.S. Mining Schools."

Thank you for the opportunity to provide information to support OSTP's request for information on critical and strategic materials supply chains.

Sincerely,



John S. Hayden, PG REM
Deputy Executive Director