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Committee on Committees

Senator Lesil McGuire

Sponsor Statement

Senate Joint Resolution 8

“Supporting the continued and increased exploration, extraction, processing, and production of rare earth elements in the state; and urging the United States Congress to support efforts of the state to develop rare earth elements in the state for the benefit of the economic and national security of the United States.”

Rare Earth Elements possess unique chemical, electrical, and physical properties that make them indispensable for a wide variety of emerging critical technologies. These include national defense, clean energy, and other consumer and industrial uses.

China currently produces 95 percent of the world’s rare earth elements and has reduced the export quotas of these elements consistently over the last 7 years. Currently, the United States has no domestic supply of rare earth elements. This poses significant risks to national security and energy security.

Mineral resources make up a major portion of the state’s economic assets and Alaska has at least one world class deposit of rare earth elements. Increased exploration for these elements along with the establishment of secondary processing and research facilities can create new career opportunities for Alaskans. Alaska is well positioned to become the United States’ leading supplier of these critical elements.

SJR 8 supports the continued and increased exploration, extraction, processing and production of rare earth elements. This Resolution urges state agencies to expedite consideration of permits required to achieve this, and also urges the United States Congress to support these efforts to develop the rare earth elements industry in Alaska.