



Support for HB177 Critical Natural Minerals Plan and Report

January 16, 2024

Representative Tom McKay
Chair, House Resources Committee
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Representative McKay and members of the House Resources Committee,

Alaska Metal Mines is writing to support House Bill 177, "An Act relating to critical and essential minerals and the global energy transition."

Alaska Metal Mines, formerly the Council of Alaska Producers, is a professional trade association formed in 1992 to represent the interests of large metal mines and advanced projects in Alaska. Our purpose is to inspire Alaskans to support a growing mining industry that produces essential minerals while prioritizing safe operations, community partnerships, and environmental protection.

There is increasing demand for responsibly produced metals and minerals for components in renewable energy technologies, military equipment, consumer electronics, and other sectors of the economy from transportation to health care. Our country's current dependence on mineral imports—often from adversarial countries—is a risk to our energy transition, national security, and the economy. Clearly, the U.S. needs more domestic mineral production. Alaska, with its abundance of minerals and rigorous regulatory process, should be part of the solution.

HB177 calls for the state to investigate strategies to encourage investment and increase exploration and production of critical and essential minerals. A robust mining industry in Alaska is crucial to this success because many of the critical minerals can only be economically produced as a by-product of other mining operations. A growing industry also creates a larger pool of skilled mine workers and local contractors to attract investment in critical mineral exploration and development.

We thank you for hearing this bill and hope you will pass it out of committee quickly.

Sincerely,

Karen Matthias
Executive Director