

U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Natural Resources
Washington, DC 20515

June 9, 2021

The Honorable Gina M. Raimondo
Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Raimondo,

Reports that the Department of Commerce is devoting U.S. taxpayer resources to grow the Canadian mining industry rather than focusing efforts domestically¹ are deeply disconcerting. Undoubtedly, securing our critical minerals supply chain serves as a vital interest for our nation. Securing our critical minerals should begin with a focus on growing American production.

In caving to the demands of environmental activists intent on harming U.S. interests, the Biden Administration is weakening our critical mineral supply chain. Instead of supporting the development of domestic mining projects, the Biden Administration, for example, chooses to promote Canada's economic growth. I expressed similar concerns in my April 28, 2021 letter with Ranking Member Bruce Westerman and others to Mr. Biden.² Of course, partnering with our allies is an important component to securing our supply chain. Such partnerships, however, should supplement, not replace, domestic production of critical minerals.

Mr. Biden's disdain for American miners was on full display during his May 18, 2021 visit to a Ford Motor Company plant in Michigan, where he simultaneously promoted electric vehicles (EVs) and foreign critical mineral production to manufacture EV batteries. One media outlet reported that "[h]e mentioned Australia's lithium reserves during the tour, but not large U.S. supplies of the key battery mineral."³ In addition to the deleterious economic effects on American miners, the Biden Administration's policies favoring foreign critical minerals are likely insufficient to achieve the sixfold increase of critical minerals by 2040 required to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050.⁴ Experts also project that "[w]hile recycling is important for the

¹ Ernest Scheyder & Jeff Lewis, *Exclusive: U.S. Looks to Canada for Minerals to Build Electric Vehicles*, REUTERS (Mar. 18, 2021), <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-mining-canada-exclusive/exclusive-u-s-looks-to-canada-for-minerals-to-build-electric-vehicles-documents-idUSKBN2BA2AJ>.

² Letter from Rep. Paul Gosar et al. to Joseph R. Biden, President, United States of America (Apr. 28, 2021) (on file with author).

³ Trevor Hunnicutt & Ernest Scheyder, *Exclusive: Biden Looks Abroad for Electric Vehicle Metals, in Blow to U.S. Miners*, REUTERS (May 25, 2021), <https://www.reuters.com/business/energy/biden-looks-abroad-electric-vehicle-metals-blow-us-miners-2021-05-25/>.

⁴ James Marshall, *Insufficient Minerals Threaten Energy Transition – Report*, E&E (May 5, 2021), <https://www.eenews.net/greenwire/stories/1063731805>.

longevity and success of a critical minerals-based economy, we simply do not have enough raw materials yet to meet projected demand through recycling alone.”⁵

Many critical minerals, including the metals needed for the development of EVs, exist in the United States.⁶ Unfortunately, several mining projects with potential to produce lithium, copper, and cobalt, are stalled, in part, because of environmental groups’ efforts to thwart production.⁷ Foreign nations benefit from environmental groups’ opposition to domestic mining projects as the United States’ reliance on foreign minerals increases.

Given these realities, it is most disturbing that the Commerce Department hosted “a [March 18, 2021] closed-door virtual meeting . . . to boost Canadian production of EV materials . . .”⁸ Mr. Biden’s Executive Orders have already led to the loss of American jobs and harmed state and local communities.⁹ It appears that the Biden Administration is preparing, yet again, to sacrifice American jobs and economic development with little to no transparency, specifically targeting the U.S. mining industry.

Therefore, to assist with congressional oversight activities, please produce the following, as soon as possible, but no later than 5:00 p.m., June 23, 2021:

1. A document sufficient to describe the agenda of the March 18, 2021 meeting held by the Department of Commerce to promote Canadian production of EV materials.
2. A document listing all attendees at the March 18, 2021 meeting.
3. A document sufficient to describe the materials, including but not limited to handouts and presentations, distributed for the March 18, 2021 meeting.
4. A document sufficient to show a cost-benefit analysis of the decision to promote Canadian critical mineral development rather than U.S. domestic development.

⁵ *Critical Minerals: Addressing Supply Chain Challenges and Rising Demand: Republican Forum Before the H. Subcomm. on Energy and Mineral Resources of the H. Comm. on Natural Resources*, 117th Cong. (2021) (statement of Abigail Wulf, Dir., Center for Critical Minerals Strategy, Securing America’s Future Energy).

⁶ Ernest Scheyder, *To Go Electric, America Needs More Mines. Can it Build Them?* REUTERS (Mar. 1, 2021), <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-mining-insight/to-go-electric-america-needs-more-mines-can-it-build-them-idUSKCN2AT39Z>.

⁷ *Id.*; see *About the Campaign*, SAVE THE BOUNDARY WATERS, <https://www.savetheboundarywaters.org/about-campaign>; see also *About the Project*, TWIN METAL MINNESOTA, <https://www.twin-metals.com/meet-twin-metals/about-the-project/>.

⁸ *Supra* note 1.

⁹ See Timothy Puko, Ken Thomas, & Andrew Restuccia, *Biden’s Climate-Change Policy Targets Oil Industry*, *The Wall. St. J.* (Jan. 26, 2021), <https://www.wsj.com/articles/biden-to-suspend-new-federal-oil-and-gas-leasing-11611672331>; Letter from Jillian Balow, Wyo. State Superintendent of Public Education, et al., to the Hon. Joseph R. Biden, President of the United States, (Feb. 17, 2021) (on file with author), *available at* <https://edu.wyoming.gov/blog/2021/02/18/statement-to-president-biden-penned-by-five-state-superintendents-and-commissioners-of-education/>.

Secretary Gina M. Raimondo

June 9, 2021

Page 3

5. All documents and communication referring or relating to efforts to increase Canadian production of minerals needed for EV materials.

Please deliver your response to room 1329 of the Longworth House Office Building. An attachment contains additional instructions for responding to this request.

Please contact the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee Minority staff at (202) 225-2761 with any questions about this request. Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Paul A. Gosar" with a stylized flourish at the end.

Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S.
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Oversight
and Investigations

Enclosure