

I voted Yes on H.R. 4402, the National Strategic and Critical Minerals Production Act.

Our nation currently relies on foreign imports for most of the minerals we use - and we are completely dependent on imports for rare earth minerals. However, the United States is estimated to have reserves of highly strategic minerals, including copper, uranium and platinum. The lack of American exploration and production of minerals is partly a result of the time it takes to bring a mine to full production and regulatory burdens placed on mining companies in our country.

The National Strategic and Critical Minerals Production Act reduces regulatory burdens and expedites the permitting process for the mining of strategic and critical minerals in order to reduce our dependence on foreign minerals and create jobs in the United States.

Specifically, the bill requires the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture to more efficiently develop American sources of strategic and critical minerals, including rare earth metals. The bill would provide a more timely permitting process, give agencies the ability to cut through red-tape, streamline duplicative reviews and ensure that projects are not indefinitely delayed by lawsuits which cost the taxpayer.

I supported H.R. 4402 because it allows our nation to more efficiently develop our own strategic and critical mineral resources, reduce our dependency on imports and boost our national security.

The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office estimates that the bill would have no significant cost.

The bill was approved by a vote of 256 – 160.