

Homeland Security News Wire

Rare Earth elements

Formation of Senate and House rare Earth minerals caucuses urged

Published 25 October 2011

The Association for Rare Earth yesterday urged the creation of Senate and House caucuses to focus on the challenges of securing supplies of rare Earth elements for U.S. high technology, clean energy, and defense communities

RARE, the Association for Rare Earth, yesterday **urged** the creation of Senate and House caucuses to focus on the challenges of securing supplies of rare Earth elements for U.S. high technology, clean energy, and defense communities.

The request comes in the wake of a Defense Department report released earlier this month warning of America's overdependence on foreign sources of rare Earth elements (REEs).

In a request letter to members of Congress, RARE's president and board wrote that such elements are "critical to the production of virtually every high-tech and clean energy product and are fundamental to the national security of the United States. A secure and sustainable supply of REEs affects thousands of companies and millions of American jobs."

The letter urged the creation of the bipartisan caucus to "assist the REE community in navigating the rapidly changing and still emerging issues surrounding rare earths." RARE Advisory Board member Roger Ballentine, former chairman of the White House Climate Change Task Force in the Clinton administration, said, "Important legislative work is already being undertaken on this issue, and much more needs to be done to ensure reliable access to these materials that are critical to our technology and clean energy needs." He cited House passage last year of the Rare Earths and Critical Materials Revitalization Act of 2010, and a hearing focused on the subject last month in the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

Adam Falkoff, president of RARE, said that the association looks forward to working with Congress and the administration to develop bipartisan solutions. "We are seeing a growing awareness of the problem, and also a desire among many to put in place the policies required to grow domestic and foreign sources for these critical materials," Falkoff said.