



New U.S. based REE Association wants Senate and House Caucuses set up

Proponents say Congressional Rare Earth Caucuses would help focus the emerging policy debate about how to expand domestic and foreign production of rare earth minerals and metals.

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RENO, NV -

The newly formed Association for Rare Earth Monday sent letters to the U.S. House and Senate, calling for the creation of Rare Earths Caucuses in both the Senate and the House.

The group RARE (The Association of Rare Earth) was launched earlier this month by a bipartisan group of senior leaders from the energy, environment and national security fields.

RARE seeks to increase REE production; remove barriers to access of REE domestically and internationally; increase the affordability and trade of rare earths minerals as well as the affordability of technologically and environmentally advanced products made with rare earth minerals.

In a letter to senators and representatives who have previously sponsored rare earths legislation, RARE noted, "Even as the international REE community is working to find new sources of REEs and new trade partners, there are several crucial pieces of REE-focused legislation moving through Congress."

"The creation of a Rare Earths Caucus in the United States Senate would greatly aid the REE community in navigating the rapidly changing and still emerging issues surrounding rare earths," RARE said. "We urge you and your colleagues to work expeditiously to form a caucus that will build upon the good work already undertaken by Congress on this important issue."

The request comes in the wake of a Defense Department report released earlier this month warning of America's overdependence on foreign sources of REE. The Pentagon report to Congress recommends specific actions to reduce the risk of disruptions in rare earth supplies to America's defense needs.

Those recommendations include development of risk mitigation strategies for the heavier elements, especially dysprosium, yttrium, praseodymium and neodymium. The DOD report also suggested the department identify and prioritize rare earth product applications in order to mitigate/diminish supply and scheduling disruptions to selected defense system applications.

RARE Board of Advisors member John Paul Woodley, a former assistant secretary of the Army for public works, said the report "brings much-needed focus to the policy debate now emerging in Washington about how to expand domestic and foreign production of rare earth minerals and metals."

"No single nation should control a resource that every nation needs," he said. "The supply challenge is solvable when and if we decide to lead."

"We need to get a sense of urgency for meeting the challenge of having a reliable, long-term rare earth mineral supply," Woodley said. "Now is the time to build a consensus to solve supply problems while creating and keeping jobs here at home."

The president of RARE is Adam Falkoff, a former executive director of the Republican Technology Council, a former senior director of government affairs for the Consumer Electronics Association, and a former staffer for the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation.

RARE's Board of Advisors includes Roger Ballentine, former chairman of the White House Climate Change Task Force, Stuart Holliday, former Ambassador to the United Nations for Special Political Affairs, John Howard, former U.S. federal environmental executives; Vice Admiral Conrad Lautenbacher, former NOAA administrator, former Congressman Thomas McMillen, and Woodley, former U.S. assistant deputy undersecretary of defense for environment.