

Committee on Energy and Commerce

**Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery
of**

Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations Ranking Member Yvette Clarke

Hearing on “Examining Ways to Enhance Our Domestic Critical Mineral Supply Chains”

May 21, 2025

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is a very important issue and one that, in the past, was precisely the kind of hearing that was appropriate for Congressional oversight and debate. However, this is not the past—today is different. Last week my colleagues across the aisle showed what they care about and it’s not investing in critical mineral supply chains. They showed how far they are willing to go and the countless communities they are willing to betray just to give their billionaire donors even more money. It is truly upsetting. The American people are calling out to Congress for help, and Republicans seem determined to ignore them.

As Ranking Member of this Subcommittee, I am deeply committed to keeping our nation safe, for the ability of families to make ends meet, for the preservation of our environment, and for holding this administration accountable. I share my colleagues’ concern about the state of our domestic critical mineral supply chains. These core elements are necessary to some of the biggest industries in the US—our technology, energy, transportation, and defense sectors all heavily rely on materials that, for the most part, we are forced to import from other countries. This is not sustainable.

The global race for critical minerals—like lithium, cobalt, rare earth elements, and nickel—is intensifying. These valuable resources are the building blocks of modern technology and the clean energy economy. Electric vehicle batteries, wind turbines, and semiconductors all depend on these minerals, and that dependence is only growing. Not only is the United States forced to rely on foreign sources for these minerals, often they come from or are processed in countries that are our adversaries.

This dependence makes us vulnerable and exposes us to risks too big to bear. To remain competitive and secure, we must enhance our own ability to supply critical minerals, starting with enhancing our responsible mining abilities, scaling up refining and processing, and expanding recycling and reuse.

Democrats enacted the historic Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act—two historic pieces of legislation that, among other things, funded domestic mineral processing capacity and supported research and development. The IRA, which was passed without a single Republican vote, invested over \$350 billion in clean energy manufacturing and critical mineral development. It provided tax credits to companies that source materials either domestically or from allies, created thousands of good-paying union jobs, and reduced emissions.

This progress and these gains are under threat from Republicans who are trying to repeal or defund these vital programs. These successful investments are being destroyed by the shortsighted push from Republicans to give giant tax cuts for billionaires and large corporations. Their obsession with rewarding Trump's friends undermines our ability to fund critical programs that support the clean energy transition, infrastructure development, and domestic manufacturing.

We know overcoming the climate crisis will demand bold, creative solutions to the challenges that lie ahead. As co-chair of the Smart Cities Caucus, I believe technology—technology that often relies on critical minerals—can make communities more sustainable, resilient, and livable. We must continue investments that incentivize innovation in clean and critical mineral technologies, particularly those that minimize environmental and community impacts. We must also invest in workforce development and support historically underserved communities.

Let me be clear: tax cuts for billionaires do not strengthen our supply chains. They do not help build battery factories, or lithium processing plants, or rare earth recycling facilities. They do not train workers for the green jobs of the future, and they do not reduce our dependence on foreign regimes for vital resources. What they do is starve the government of the revenue we need to make smart, strategic investments in America's future. Instead of supporting clean energy innovation and domestic supply chain resilience, Republicans are fighting to extend and expand tax breaks for the wealthiest Americans—at the expense of investments in climate, jobs, and national security.

I call on my colleagues across the aisle to abandon this reckless agenda of tax breaks for billionaires and instead support investments in a strong, secure, and just clean energy future. The American people deserve leadership that puts the long-term strength of our economy and planet above short-term political gains.

We must continue to invest in our domestic mineral supply chains, support innovation and equity, and reject the failed tax policies that undermine our progress. Our national security, our climate, and our prosperity depend on it.

I yield back.