

118TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. RES. 1082

Calling upon the International Seabed Authority to adopt regulations allowing the collection of critical minerals from the international seabed area, which will enable America to regain reliable and responsible supply chains, provide high-wage jobs for United States citizens, secure supply chains away from the People's Republic of China's dominance of the critical mineral supply chain, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 15, 2024

Mr. HUNT submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

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## RESOLUTION

Calling upon the International Seabed Authority to adopt regulations allowing the collection of critical minerals from the international seabed area, which will enable America to regain reliable and responsible supply chains, provide high-wage jobs for United States citizens, secure supply chains away from the People's Republic of China's dominance of the critical mineral supply chain, and for other purposes.

Whereas the United States acknowledges the importance that critical minerals will have in the future;

Whereas critical minerals, along with rare-earth minerals, are the building blocks of technology, information and communications technology, and defense;

Whereas critical minerals are used in the construction of advanced defense systems and clean energy technologies;

Whereas the People's Republic of China (PRC) currently dominates global mineral production and refining, with a market share of up to 90 percent;

Whereas the PRC builds on environmental and human rights violations, including attacks against grassroots leaders, water pollution, ecosystem destruction, and unsafe working conditions;

Whereas, building upon previous investments with the Belt and Road Initiative, Chinese President Xi Jinping's flagship foreign policy initiative, China has spent the past 2 decades pouring at least \$170,000,000,000 into building ports, railroads, and other massive infrastructure projects across Africa;

Whereas, although the United States has a vast collection of minerals, excessive regulations and Federal overreach have made it virtually impossible to mine in America;

Whereas leases were recently canceled for the Twin Metals mine, which contains the largest deposit of cobalt and nickel in the United States;

Whereas the processing and refining of critical minerals in the United States will require access to sufficient feedstocks and a regulatory landscape that does not involve insurmountable roadblocks;

Whereas the International Seabed Authority (ISA) has estimated that the Clarion-Clipperton Zone (CCZ), in the

international seabed area of the Pacific Ocean, contains 21,000,000,000 tons of polymetallic nodules;

Whereas the CCZ is estimated to contain more manganese, nickel, and cobalt than the entire global terrestrial reserve base for those minerals, combined;

Whereas the CCZ is a 48,000,000,000,000 square feet area in the Pacific Ocean between Hawaii and Mexico;

Whereas, because the CCZ is located in the international seabed area, the ISA, a United Nations organization, manages and regulates these ocean floor minerals;

Whereas the ISA is an autonomous international organization established under the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS);

Whereas the ISA is an organization through which only signatories to UNCLOS organize and control all mineral resources-related activities in the international seabed area, which covers approximately 54 percent of the total area of the world's oceans;

Whereas the European Union and 168 nations are members of the ISA, including China and Russia;

Whereas the United States is not a member of the ISA but could obtain access to minerals located in the CCZ through partnerships with ISA contractors based in allied countries that are aligned with United States interests;

Whereas the ISA is currently deliberating on rules to govern the collection of polymetallic nodules, and only ISA members have a vote on these regulations;

Whereas the ISA has issued 19 current exploration contracts for polymetallic nodules, including 3 sponsored by the

PRC for Chinese entities, 2 of which sit in the CCZ, the area of most economic interest;

Whereas the United States must not let this imminent economic opportunity be ceded to China because of our unwillingness to act; and

Whereas the United States needs the innovation and ingenuity that made this country great more than ever: Now, therefore, be it

1       *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2               (1) recognizes that diverse and resilient energy  
3       and mineral supply chains are vital for the United  
4       States, our partners, and allies, and for global economic  
5       stability;

6               (2) affirms that the International Seabed Authority  
7       should adopt the regulations by 2025 in  
8       order to avoid delays to a critical industry; and

9               (3) affirms that it is in the national interest of  
10       the United States to provide a regulatory environment  
11       that supports the domestic processing and refining  
12       of critical minerals, including polymetallic  
13       nodules located in the Clarion-Clipperton Zone.

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