

Dear Cong. Tim Walz:

I am writing to urge your support for H.R. 3905, the "Minnesota's Economic Rights (MINER) in the Superior National Forest Act," bipartisan legislation sponsored by Cong. Tom Emmer (MN-6th) and cosponsored by Cong. Collin Peterson (MN-7th), Cong. Jason Lewis (MN-2nd) and Cong. Paul Gosar (AZ-4th). H.R. 3905 is currently on the agenda of the House Rules Committee, on a path for House floor action.

In 1950, Congress took action to make land available for mineral exploration and development within the Superior National Forest (SNF) within the Iron Range region in Northeast Minnesota. In 1978, Congress prohibited mining within the region's Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCAW) and an adjacent protective buffer zone, while reaffirming that mining should be allowed and promoted in the remaining area of the SNF.

Unfortunately, the economic future of the region is now threatened by federal agency actions initiated in December 2016 that would cancel valid, long-standing federal mineral leases and withdraw 235,000 acres of federal land in the region from future mining development, contrary to the previous directives by Congress. If allowed to stand, these agency actions will eliminate the possible creation of thousands of good-paying jobs, billions of dollars in economic growth, and billions more in revenues for Minnesota's public schools through mineral development on state school trust lands.

H.R. 3905 aims to correct the injustices being thrust upon the Iron Range by requiring congressional approval of any mineral withdrawal or monument designation involving the National Forest System lands in the State of Minnesota, as well as providing for the renewal of certain mineral leases and ensuring future leases in the area remain valid and renewed as outlined by current law. Moreover, H.R. 3905 changes no environmental review processes, relaxes no environmental standards, and specifically restates Congress' prohibition on any mining activity in the BWCAW and surrounding protective buffer.

H.R. 3905 would reaffirm long-standing Congressional intent in the management and development of critical minerals in Minnesota, eliminate bureaucratic delays in developing environmentally-responsible mine projects proposals, and restore the promise of future job

growth and economic opportunity to an economically distressed region of the state. We strongly urge your vote in support of H.R 3905.

Thank you,

Aaron Stolp
Cyber Support Services
ALLETE, Inc.
Office: (218)723-7447
Cell: (218)259-5286