

has prompted project proponents to look to the United States as a safer alternative, given that projects can be developed in a reasonable timeframe.

That said, Mr. Chairman, the majority's claims of mining permit delays for all kinds of mining projects that prompted this bill are unfounded. Last year the average time it took to approve a plan of operations for a hardrock mine was 17 months, and since 2008, the approval time has actually decreased. As of last year, the Obama administration had approved 69 percent of hardrock mines within 3 years.

Rather than addressing the problem directly with the responsible agencies, as President Obama did in his Presidential order "Improving Performance of Federal Permitting and Review of Infrastructure Projects" dated March 22, 2012, this bill is an end run around the permitting process, the authority of the permitting agencies, and the courts.

H.R. 1937 includes a very broad definition of "strategic and critical minerals" that does not take into account whether these minerals are actually in short supply in the United States. Under the definition as written, cement, and wallboard, as well as gold and diamonds would qualify. It makes one wonder if there is a strategic and critical shortage of jewelry in the United States.

The authors of this bill say that they do not wish to identify which mineral products are "strategic and critical" since this may change over time with changes in national priorities. Therefore, this amendment adds a simple test. This amendment requires proposed "strategic and critical minerals" projects to demonstrate that domestic capacity to produce strategic and critical minerals is less than 80 percent of domestic requirements. This would eliminate mineral products such as sand and gravel, which the authors claim the bill was never meant to encompass.

The amendment also requires that unless or until the domestic capacity for a "strategic and critical mineral" product exceeds 80 percent of domestic requirements, the public will be notified of the intent to transport or sell any final or intermediate strategic and critical mineral products outside of the United States.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of my amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Colorado is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Chairman, I am having a little trouble understanding where this amendment is headed and what it is really trying to do. If I understand correctly, it proposes to limit export of strategic and critical minerals if the supply of those minerals is greater than 80 percent of domestic de-

mand. As I am trying to figure that out, one thing that jumps out at me is why is 80 percent a significant milestone? It seems sort of plucked out of thin air. It seems arbitrary.

How would you measure and find that 80 percent of something that is used in many ways around the country, I am not sure how that would be done, by advertising in national newspapers or something? I am just a little unsure.

Also, the amendment appears to be internally inconsistent. On one hand, the amendment seeks to prevent the use of the bill's provisions if the supply is greater than 80 percent of domestic demands. On the other hand, the amendment says that the project proponent cannot show that production exceeds 80 percent of domestic demand, the project proponent must advertise that fact in a national newspaper, trade publications, or Web site.

I am just a little confused as to what this amendment is really trying to get at. But it does seem to be, in the final analysis, a continuation of the over-regulation that has produced this problem in the first place. We have so many regulatory obstacles to producing minerals that it does take 7 to 10 years.

Now, if you take a certain slice out of that process, it may sound like a smaller period of time. But when you add in litigation and everything else that accompanies the process, it is literally 7 to 10 years, especially for hardrock mine projects that produce rare earth minerals and things like that.

There might be a few exceptions for clay or other items that are of less concern, but for hardrock mining, there is no way to avoid the 7 to 10 years, unfortunately, in our country today. This would be another example of the kind of regulation that just gums up the whole process.

So, Mr. Chairman, I would urge the rejection of this amendment.

I urge a "no" vote.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS. I yield back the balance of my time, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS).

The question was taken; and the Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Florida will be postponed.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON) having assumed the chair, Mr. MARCHANT, Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1937) to require the Secretary of

the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to more efficiently develop domestic sources of the minerals and mineral materials of strategic and critical importance to United States economic and national security and manufacturing competitiveness, had come to no resolution thereon.

#### RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 3:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 57 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1532

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MARCHANT) at 3 o'clock and 32 minutes p.m.

#### NATIONAL STRATEGIC AND CRITICAL MINERALS PRODUCTION ACT OF 2015

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 481 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 1937.

Will the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) kindly take the chair.

□ 1533

#### IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 1937) to require the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to more efficiently develop domestic sources of the minerals and mineral materials of strategic and critical importance to United States economic and national security and manufacturing competitiveness, with Mr. BOST (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole rose earlier today, a request for a recorded vote on amendment No. 5 printed in House Report 114-301 offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS) had been postponed.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, proceedings will now resume on those amendments printed in House Report 114-301 on which further proceedings were postponed, in the following order:

Amendment No. 1 by Mr. LOWENTHAL of California.

Amendment No. 2 by Mrs. DINGELL of Michigan.

Amendment No. 3 by Mr. CARTWRIGHT of Pennsylvania.

Amendment No. 5 by Mr. HASTINGS of Florida.