



Natural building blocks for quality of life

July 9, 2013

The Honorable Mark Amodei
U.S. House of Representatives
222 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Amodei:

Thank you for introducing H.R.761, the *National Strategic and Critical Minerals Production Act of 2013*, a bill that is nearly identical to the one you introduced during the 112th Congress and was passed by the U.S. House of Representatives with strong, bipartisan support. The National Stone, Sand & Gravel Association (NSSGA) supports this legislation and urges members of the House to vote for passage.

Our members are the crushed stone, sand, and gravel operations in almost every congressional district in the country and the principle suppliers of materials that are essential to build and rehabilitate our nation's highways, roads, and bridges. According to the text of H.R.761, the term "strategic and critical minerals" refers to minerals that are necessary "to support domestic manufacturing, agriculture, housing, telecommunications, healthcare, and transportation infrastructure." Indeed, aggregates are used in nearly all residential, commercial, and industrial building construction and in most public works projects, such as roads, highways, bridges, railroad beds, dams, airports, water and sewage treatment plants, and tunnels.

In the committee report submitted by Natural Resources Committee Chairman Doc Hastings, sand and gravel were mentioned as examples of "construction mineral materials" needed for reconstruction that could be in short supply following a major emergency. The U.S. Geological Survey conducted a simulated major earthquake emergency response exercise for Southern California in 2009 that found "there were not enough sand and gravel and other construction materials available in the region to meet the affected area's reconstruction needs."

H.R.761 will also help to speed development on federal lands of strategic and critical minerals, including aggregates, by limiting the duration of reviews of drilling permits and requiring concurrent rather than sequential consideration. This was a key component of last year's successful surface transportation reauthorization legislation, *Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) Act*, and will surely help to reduce unnecessary delays in mining development and the completion of major transportation infrastructure projects.

We thank you for introducing the *National Strategic and Critical Minerals Production Act of 2013* in the U.S. House of Representatives and look forward to its swift enactment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. A. Edwards, III". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "E".

R. A. Edwards, III
President & CEO