

Calls on the President and Congress to take Immediate Action

October 20, 2010



(WASHINGTON) - Rep. Mike Coffman (R-CO) issued the following statement after media reports surfaced that the Chinese government was halting exports to the United States of critical rare earth metals:

“Reports that the Chinese government has expanded its rare earths embargo, blocking shipments to the U.S. and announcing it will cut exports of these critical materials by up to 30 percent next year as retribution for currency and trade disputes are extremely disturbing. It is absolutely critical to our national security that the president and this Congress take immediate action to protect U.S. interests.”

“In the short term, it is incumbent upon the president to make this a national issue and ensure our national security interests are not beholden to the Chinese. As a long term solution, I am reiterating my call that Congress immediately pass the RESTART Act. The looming crisis can be averted, but America must act now.”

“Every day that passes without the U.S. taking significant action to restart a domestic rare earths industry, our national security is placed in greater jeopardy and we become further beholden to a nation that time and time again shows they are not a reliable ally or trading partner. Make no mistake, the threat that reliance on China for rare earths poses to both U.S. economic and national security is real.”

Coffman is the author of H.R. 4866, Rare Earths Supply-Chain Technology and Resources Transformation (RESTART) Act. Coffman previously introduced legislation included in last year's defense authorization bill requiring the Comptroller General to determine the extent to which specific military weapons systems are currently dependent upon rare-earth materials and the degree to which U.S. is dependent upon sources that could be interrupted or disrupted. That report was completed in April of this year and the Department of Defense is currently undertaking their own study, due to be completed in the coming weeks.

Read the original here:

http://coffman.house.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=366:october-20-2010-coffman-slams-chinese-for-rare-earths-freeze&catid=36:latest-news&Itemid=10