



US SENATOR MURKOWSKI LAUNCHES AMERICAN MINERAL SECURITY ACT AT BENCHMARK MINERALS SUMMIT IN WASHINGTON DC

US Government Senator Lisa Murkowski has introduced bipartisan legislation to secure its mineral resources and supply chains for its 21st century auto and energy industries at the inaugural **Benchmark Minerals Summit 2019** in Washington DC.

Senator Murkowski has led the push, in particular in her role as chair of the US Senate Committee of Energy and Natural Resources, to secure the supply of critical minerals such as lithium, graphite, cobalt and nickel and reduce the US reliance on foreign sources.

The new legislation, The American Mineral Security Act, however, goes further than ever before, looking at not only the domestic mineral resources but the supply chains that refine the raw materials into speciality, engineered materials for lithium ion batteries and electric vehicles.

The legislation follows a number of US Senate hearings on the subject which featured testimonies from Benchmark Minerals' Managing Director, Simon Moores in [October 2017](#) and [February 2019](#).

The **Benchmark Minerals Summit 2019** was a private, closed-door event for industry leaders and US government representatives held under Chatham House Rules.

The **Benchmark Minerals Summit 2020** will be held in February 2020 in Washington DC. It is invite only but you can apply by emailing info@benchmarkminerals.com

SENATOR LISA MURKOWSKI SAID:

"I recently spoke at the Benchmark Minerals Summit on our foreign mineral dependence. The significance of foreign oil dependence is widely understood, but our foreign mineral dependence is equally – if not more – serious.

“Last year we imported at least 50 percent of 48 minerals, including 100 percent of 18 of them. That should worry everyone, particularly because it is happening at the same time that demand, for everything from graphite and lithium to cobalt and nickel, is about to skyrocket.

“I have introduced the American Mineral Security Act, a bipartisan bill that takes a comprehensive approach to rebuilding our domestic mineral supply chain. Unless we take significant steps, we’re at risk of ceding major economic drivers to other countries.”

SIMON MOORES, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF BENCHMARK MINERAL INTELLIGENCE SAID:

“Senator Murkowski has taken a true leading role in US supply chain security for the critical minerals that are the foundation of the 21st century automotive and energy industries.

“We are in the midst of a global battery arms race that is intensifying.

“Lithium, graphite, cobalt and nickel are the key enablers of the lithium ion battery and, in turn, the lithium ion battery is the key enabler of the energy storage revolution. Globally, they are facing a wall of demand especially from electric vehicles yet the US has been a bystander in building a domestic supply chain capacity.

“Right now, the US produces 1% of global lithium supply and only 7% of refined lithium chemical supply, while China produces 51%. For cobalt, the US has zero mining capacity and zero chemicals capacity whilst China controls 80% of this second stage.

“Graphite is the most extreme example with no flake graphite mining and anode production compared to China’s 51% and 100% of the world’s total, respectively. And its a similar story with nickel: under 1% mined in the US and zero capacity for nickel sulfate.

“These supply chains are the oil pipelines of tomorrow. The lithium ion battery is to the 21st century is what the oil barrel was to the 20th century.

“Senator Murkowski’s focus on not just the mineral resources but the entire supply chain is absolutely crucial to giving the industry confidence to build a US blueprint for the energy storage revolution.”

View the full press release [here](#).

SENATOR MURKOWSKI OUTLINED THE KEY PROVISIONS ON THE AMERICAN MINERALS SECURITY ACT AS:

- Codify the methodology used in Executive Order 13817 to designate a list of critical minerals and require that list to be updated at least every three years;
- Require nationwide resource assessments for every critical mineral;
- Implement several practical, common sense permitting reforms for the Department of the Interior (DOI) and Department of Agriculture Forest Service to reduce delays in the federal process;
- Reauthorize the National Geological and Geophysical Data Preservation Program for 10 years;
- Authorize research and development for recycling and replacements for critical minerals, as well as chemistry, material science, and applied research and development for processing of critical minerals;
- Require coordination and study of energy needs for remote mining deposits with microgrid research and small generation research programs across the Department of Energy’s applied offices; and
- Require the Secretary of Labor, the National Academy of Sciences, and the National Science Foundation to conduct a study of the nation’s minerals workforce