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January 21, 2026

The Honorable Pete Stauber
U.S. House of Representatives
145 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Stauber:

On behalf of the National Federation of Independent Business, I write in support of H.J. Res. 140, which would overturn the Department of the Interior's Public Land Order (PLO) 7917. This PLO instituted the Biden Administration's January 2023 mining ban on over 225,000 acres in the Superior National Forest.

NFIB represents approximately 300,000 small and independent businesses across the United States, including nearly 10,000 in the state of Minnesota. Despite the country's ongoing need for domestically produced mineral resources, state and federal regulations often make the exploration and extraction process a bureaucratic nightmare. The Wall Street Journal Editorial Board recently noted that it takes on average "an incredible 29 years to develop a mine in the U.S., the second longest in the world after Zambia."¹ Small businesses understand this bureaucratic process is not sustainable. In a recent NFIB member ballot, 88% of NFIB members supported Congress streamlining the onerous and time-consuming regulations placed on US producers.²

Access to the Duluth Complex was significantly limited by this PLO. This region is the world's largest untapped copper and nickel deposit in the world. It contains 95% of the country's nickel resources, 88% of our cobalt, 75% of America's platinum, and more than one-third of our copper. Ensuring access to these resources is critical to the national and economic security of the United States.

The Biden PLO cancelled multiple important mining and extraction plans, including the Twin Metals project, which is expected to bring over 2,000 jobs to the region alone.³ H.J. Res 140 will finally provide these operators with the certainty that they need to invest in the area by ensuring that an overzealous future administration cannot shut down mining in Northern Minnesota.

NFIB supports repealing this burdensome rule and other rules that reduce economic opportunities and increase costs for small businesses. We look forward to working with you to advance this resolution.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. Bertolotti".

Louis A. Bertolotti
Principal, Federal Government Relations
NFIB

¹ Editorial Board, *Wall Street Journal*. April 27, 2025. "A Copper Minefield of Obstruction." <https://www.wsj.com/opinion/arizona-resolution-copper-mine-nepa-ninth-circuit-donald-trump-cf3c9e48>.

² NFIB Member Ballot, Mandate, vol. 582., March 2023, *Should Congress streamline regulations to facilitate the production and transport of oil, natural gas, and other energy sources in the United States? (Yes: 88% No: 6% Undecided: 6%)*

³ "About the Project." *Twin Metals Minnesota*. <https://www.twin-metals.com/meet-twin-metals/about-the-project/>.