

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

October 9, 2026

The Honorable Pete Hegseth
Secretary of War
U.S. Department of War
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, D.C., 20301

Secretary Hegseth,

We urge the Department to identify where copper mining, processing, refining, recycling, and related infrastructure can be developed on the roughly 3.12 million acres of defense land it manages in Arizona.ⁱ Arizona should be a cornerstone of America's defense copper supply chain. These lands are a strategic asset and using them to expand domestic copper production and processing would help close supply-chain gaps and secure materials our military depends on.

Copper is indispensable to military readiness. It is embedded in electrical systems, communications equipment, munitions, aircraft, naval vessels, and the installations that support them. Yet the United States remains vulnerable to disruptions in the mining, processing, and refining capacity needed to supply this essential material.

Arizona offers the clearest path forward. Arizona is the leading copper-producing state and accounts for approximately 70% of U.S. mined copper.ⁱⁱ It also has substantial copper deposits, a skilled mining and industrial workforce, existing energy and transportation infrastructure, and major military installations nearby. These assets make Arizona an essential part of any effort to expand secure domestic copper capacity.

The President has set the direction. Executive Order 14220 declared copper essential to national security. Executive Order 14241 called for facilitating domestic mineral production to the maximum extent possible. And Executive Order 14415, signed July 20, 2026, makes it U.S. policy that the critical materials used to build and sustain our military come from domestic or allied sources. Copper is where those orders meet, and Arizona is where the copper is.

Accordingly, we respectfully request that the Department:

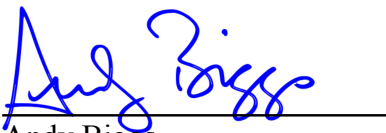
1. Identify the defense lands in Arizona that can support mining, processing, and refining of copper and other critical minerals, consistent with military training, testing, and readiness needs.
2. Identify the authorities, programs, partnerships, and investments the Department can leverage to accelerate mining, processing, refining, and recycling capacity in Arizona, and identify any statutory changes Congress should consider.

3. We request that the Department provide our offices with a briefing within 90 days on its progress in implementing this effort, including any potential sites and projects, applicable authorities and resources, and outstanding infrastructure and permitting requirements.

Arizona has the resources, workforce, infrastructure, and military presence to play a central role in securing America's copper supply. We urge the Department to put these assets to work.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to working with you to strengthen America's defense supply chain and ensure our military has the materials it needs.

Sincerely,



Andy Biggs
Member of Congress



Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S.
Member of Congress



Elijah Crane
Member of Congress

ⁱ Office of the Assistant Secretary of War for Sustainment, Real Property, Business Systems & Information
Directorate: "Base Structure Report — FY25 Baseline" (as of 30 Sept 2024)

ⁱⁱ U.S. Geological Survey, *Mineral Commodity Summaries 2026* (February 2026), Copper.