



CRITICAL MINERALS CLASSIFICATION IMPROVEMENT ACT (H.R. 8045)

The Critical Minerals Classification Improvement Act removes the exclusion of fuel minerals from the definition of critical minerals, so critical minerals that have fuel uses – like uranium – can be included.

SUMMARY

The Critical Minerals Classification Improvement Act allows uranium, a fuel mineral that provides [about 20%](#) of U.S. electricity, to be nationally recognized as a mineral that is critical for energy security. Uranium was on the final list of critical minerals until fuel minerals were excluded from the definition in the Energy Act of 2020. Without the exclusion, uranium meets all the criteria of a critical mineral. It is important for uranium to be included on the critical minerals list so policymakers can understand the importance of nuclear energy to the economy and national security, and appropriately protect the vulnerabilities in the nuclear supply chain.

HISTORY:

In 2017, President Trump signed [Executive Order \(EO\) 13817](#), “A Federal Strategy to Ensure Secure and Reliable Supplies of Critical Minerals.” Among other things, the EO directed the Secretary of Interior to develop an official list of critical minerals. In 2018, Interior’s U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) published a [final list](#) of critical minerals, including uranium. At the time, the USGS noted that it included uranium due to “high production concentration and significant import reliance.” However, due to the definition in Section 7002 of the Energy Act of 2020, in 2022 the USGS [revised](#) its list to exclude all fuel minerals, which removed uranium from the list.

The Energy Act of 2020 requires a critical mineral to meet three criteria: 1) be essential to the economic and national security of the United States; 2) have a supply chain which is vulnerable to disruption; and 3) serve an essential function in manufacturing a product, including energy, where the absence of that function would have significant consequences. Nuclear energy, and its uranium fuel, are critical to American economic and national security; nuclear energy currently accounts for [about 20%](#) of U.S. electricity generation. The uranium supply chain is also [vulnerable to disruption](#): In 2020, [0.01% of uranium mined](#) worldwide was in the U.S. and [46% of enrichment capacity](#), a process required to make fuel, took place in Russia.

Allowing fuel minerals such as uranium to be included on the critical minerals list is important so policymakers can recognize the national security implications of fuel minerals, understand the full scope of U.S. supply chain vulnerabilities, and develop strategies to strengthen domestic supply chains.

SPECIFICS:

The Critical Minerals Classification Improvement Act makes two simple changes to allow uranium to be classified as a critical mineral.

- Amends the definition of critical mineral to remove the exclusion of fuel minerals.
- Directs the Director of the United States Geological Survey to complete revisions to the final list of critical minerals 90 days after enactment.

ORIGINAL SPONSORS:

Rep. Pfluger (R-TX)
Rep. Newhouse (R-WA)
Rep. Cuellar (D-TX)
Rep. Gonzalez (D-TX)

COSPONSORS:

SUPPORT: ClearPath Action, National Mining Association, Citizens for Responsible Energy Solutions (CRES), U.S. Nuclear Industry Council (USNIC), Uranium Producers of America, U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Global Energy Institute, American Exploration & Mining Association, and Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI)

CONGRESS.GOV LINK: [H.R. 8045](#)

PRINTABLE SUMMARY:

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