



Written by [William F. Jasper](#) on June 17, 2024

Idaho Can Save U.S. From Deadly Dependency on China for Strategic Minerals: Mining Expert

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Geological engineer and mining expert Darr Moon delivered a sobering message to the Idaho State Republican Convention in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho on June 13. Decades of environmental regulatory overkill, lawfare, and media demonization of mining have chased the mining industry out of the United States and locked up our abundant mineral resources that are necessary for a sustainable economy and national defense. America, which was previously the world leader in mining and metallurgy and which developed the technologies and techniques used all over the world, has now become dangerously dependent on China, Russia, and other adversaries. "We will not continue as a modern, industrialized society, let alone a superpower if this dangerous trend is not reversed - and soon," he told The New American. Most Americans are unaware that we are 100 percent dependent on foreign countries, principally China, for example, for gallium, indium, mica, graphite, scandium, tantalum, manganese, strontium, and yttrium. And 95 percent dependent for rare earths, titanium, and bismuth.

Our computers, cell phones, televisions, medical and scientific instruments -- virtually everything electronic -- depends on these essential materials. "A Stealth F-35 fighter jet requires 920 pounds of rare earth elements (REEs) and an Arleigh Burke class destroyer requires 5,200 pounds" he noted.





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We are also severely dependent on foreign copper, zinc, cobalt, silver, antimony, tungsten, magnesium, vanadium, potash, chromium, and aluminum. The good news, Moon said, is that there is no excuse for this dependence, since the western states of the U.S. are abundantly blessed with vast treasures of these vitally needed resources. "Idaho, the 'Gem State,' is particularly blessed with many of these elements in rich concentrations," he noted. The problem, he notes, is that the federal government has locked up these resources under various environmental pretexts. The solution to this problem is to remove the federal government's political stranglehold on our minerals and our mining, processing, and refining. "Trump proved that it could be done with oil and gas, converting us from energy dependency to energy independence and energy exporting. The same must be done with regard to our situation with strategic minerals," Moon said.



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