

Calendar No. 292

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 912

[Report No. 118–139]

To require the Secretary of Energy to provide technology grants to strengthen domestic mining education, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 22, 2023

Mr. BARRASSO (for himself, Mr. MANCHIN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. KELLY, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Ms. SINEMA, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. TESTER, Mr. CRAMER, and Mr. ROMNEY) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

DECEMBER 18, 2023

Reported by Mr. MANCHIN, without amendment

A BILL

To require the Secretary of Energy to provide technology grants to strengthen domestic mining education, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Technology Grants to
3 Strengthen Domestic Mining Education Act of 2023” or
4 the “Mining Schools Act of 2023”.

5 **SEC. 2. TECHNOLOGY GRANTS TO STRENGTHEN DOMESTIC**
6 **MINING EDUCATION.**

7 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

8 (1) BOARD.—The term “Board” means the
9 Mining Professional Development Advisory Board
10 established by subsection (d)(1).

11 (2) MINING INDUSTRY.—The term “mining in-
12 dustry” means the mining industry of the United
13 States, consisting of the search for, and extraction,
14 beneficiation, refining, smelting, and processing of,
15 naturally occurring metal and nonmetal minerals
16 from the earth.

17 (3) MINING PROFESSION.—The term “mining
18 profession” means the body of jobs directly relevant
19 to—

20 (A) the exploration, planning, execution,
21 and remediation of metal and nonmetal mining
22 sites; and

23 (B) the extraction, including the separa-
24 tion, refining, alloying, smelting, concentration,
25 and processing, of mineral ores.

1 (4) MINING SCHOOL.—The term “mining
2 school” means—

3 (A) a mining, metallurgical, geological, or
4 mineral engineering program accredited by the
5 Accreditation Board for Engineering and Tech-
6 nology, Inc., that is located at an institution of
7 higher education (as defined in section 101 of
8 the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.
9 1001)); or

10 (B) a geology or engineering program or
11 department that is located at a 4-year public in-
12 stitution of higher education (as so defined) lo-
13 cated in a State the gross domestic product of
14 which in 2021 was not less than
15 \$2,000,000,000 in the combined categories of
16 “Mining (except oil and gas)” and “Support ac-
17 tivities for mining”, according to the Bureau of
18 Economic Analysis.

19 (5) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
20 the Secretary of Energy.

21 (b) DOMESTIC MINING EDUCATION STRENGTHENING
22 PROGRAM.—The Secretary, in consultation with the Sec-
23 retary of the Interior (acting through the Director of the
24 United States Geological Survey), shall—

1 (1) establish a grant program to strengthen do-
2 mestic mining education; and

3 (2) under the program established in paragraph
4 (1), award competitive grants to mining schools for
5 the purpose of recruiting and educating the next
6 generation of mining engineers and other qualified
7 professionals to meet the future energy and mineral
8 needs of the United States.

9 (c) GRANTS.—

10 (1) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the grant
11 program established under subsection (b)(1), the
12 Secretary shall award not more than 10 grants each
13 year to mining schools.

14 (2) SELECTION REQUIREMENTS.—

15 (A) IN GENERAL.—To the maximum ex-
16 tent practicable, the Secretary shall select re-
17 cipients for grants under paragraph (1) to en-
18 sure geographic diversity among grant recipi-
19 ents to ensure that region-specific specialties
20 are developed for region-specific geology.

21 (B) TIMELINE.—The Secretary shall
22 award the grants under paragraph (1) by not
23 later than the later of—

24 (i) the date that is 180 days after the
25 start of the applicable fiscal year; and

1 (ii) the date that is 180 days after the
2 date on which the Act making full-year ap-
3 propriations for the Department of Energy
4 for the applicable fiscal year is enacted.

5 (3) RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE BOARD.—

6 (A) IN GENERAL.—In selecting recipients
7 for grants under paragraph (1) and deter-
8 mining the amount of each grant, the Sec-
9 retary, to the maximum extent practicable, shall
10 take into consideration the recommendations of
11 the Board under subparagraphs (A) and (B) of
12 subsection (d)(3).

13 (B) SELECTION STATEMENT.—In selecting
14 recipients for grants under paragraph (1), the
15 Secretary shall—

16 (i) in response to a recommendation
17 from the Board, submit to the Board a
18 statement that describes—

19 (I) whether the Secretary accepts
20 or rejects, in whole or in part, the rec-
21 ommendation of the Board; and

22 (II) the justification and ration-
23 ale for any rejection, in whole or in
24 part, of the recommendation of the
25 Board; and

1 (ii) not later than 15 days after
2 awarding a grant for which the Board sub-
3 mitted a recommendation, publish the
4 statement submitted under clause (i) on
5 the Department of Energy website.

6 (4) USE OF FUNDS.—A mining school receiving
7 a grant under paragraph (1) shall use the grant
8 funds—

9 (A) to recruit students to the mining
10 school; and

11 (B) to enhance and support programs re-
12 lated to, as applicable—

13 (i) mining, mineral extraction effi-
14 ciency, and related processing technology;

15 (ii) emphasizing critical mineral and
16 rare earth element exploration, extraction,
17 and refining;

18 (iii) reclamation technology and prac-
19 tices for active mining operations;

20 (iv) the development of reprocessing
21 systems and technologies that facilitate
22 reclamation that fosters the recovery of re-
23 sources at abandoned mine sites;

24 (v) mineral extraction methods that
25 reduce environmental and human impacts;

1 (vi) technologies to extract, refine,
2 separate, smelt, or produce minerals, in-
3 cluding rare earth elements;

4 (vii) reducing dependence on foreign
5 energy and mineral supplies through in-
6 creased domestic critical mineral produc-
7 tion;

8 (viii) enhancing the competitiveness of
9 United States energy and mineral tech-
10 nology exports;

11 (ix) the extraction or processing of co-
12 inciding mineralization, including rare
13 earth elements, within coal, coal processing
14 byproduct, overburden, or coal residue;

15 (x) enhancing technologies and prac-
16 tices relating to mitigation of acid mine
17 drainage, reforestation, and revegetation in
18 the reclamation of land and water re-
19 sources adversely affected by mining;

20 (xi) enhancing exploration and charac-
21 terization of new or novel deposits, includ-
22 ing rare earth elements and critical min-
23 erals within phosphate rocks, uranium-
24 bearing deposits, and other nontraditional
25 sources;

1 (xii) meeting challenges of extreme
 2 mining conditions, such as deeper deposits
 3 or offshore or cold region mining; and

4 (xiii) mineral economics, including
 5 analysis of supply chains, future mineral
 6 needs, and unconventional mining re-
 7 sources.

8 (d) MINING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ADVI-
 9 SORY BOARD.—

10 (1) IN GENERAL.—There is established an advi-
 11 sory board, to be known as the “Mining Professional
 12 Development Advisory Board”.

13 (2) COMPOSITION.—The Board shall be com-
 14 posed of 6 members, to be appointed by the Sec-
 15 retary not later than 180 days after the date of en-
 16 actment of this Act, of whom—

17 (A) 3 shall be individuals who are actively
 18 working in the mining profession and for the
 19 mining industry; and

20 (B) 3 shall have experience in academia
 21 implementing and operating professional skills
 22 training and education programs in the mining
 23 sector.

24 (3) DUTIES.—The Board shall—

1 (A) evaluate grant applications received
2 under subsection (c) and make recommenda-
3 tions to the Secretary for selection of grant re-
4 cipients under that subsection;

5 (B) propose the amount of the grant for
6 each applicant recommended to be selected
7 under subparagraph (A); and

8 (C) perform oversight to ensure that grant
9 funds awarded under subsection (c) are used
10 for the purposes described in paragraph (4) of
11 that subsection.

12 (4) TERM.—A member of the Board shall serve
13 for a term of 4 years.

14 (5) VACANCIES.—A vacancy on the Board—

15 (A) shall not affect the powers of the
16 Board; and

17 (B) shall be filled in the same manner as
18 the original appointment was made by not later
19 than 180 days after the date on which the va-
20 cancy occurs.

21 (e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
22 authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
23 \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2024 through 2031.

1 **SEC. 3. REPEAL OF THE MINING AND MINERAL RESOURCES**

2 **RESEARCH INSTITUTE ACT OF 1984.**

3 The Mining and Mineral Resources Research Insti-
4 tute Act of 1984 (30 U.S.C. 1221 et seq.) is repealed.

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