

119TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

**S.** \_\_\_\_\_

To establish a new educational exchange program to strengthen domestic mining education, and for other purposes.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Ms. ROSEN introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on \_\_\_\_\_

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**A BILL**

To establish a new educational exchange program 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,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4       This Act may be cited as the “Critical Mineral Min-  
5 ing Education Act of 2026”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7       Congress finds the United States mining industry  
8 and, more broadly, mining and mineral processing and re-  
9 fining, is widely reported as facing a significant personnel  
10 shortage. This shortage is driven by an aging workforce,

1 declining numbers of graduates entering mining careers,  
2 and difficulty recruiting and retaining skilled workers.  
3 Fifty percent of the current mining workforce is expected  
4 to retire within the next 5 years. In 2023, only 14 United  
5 States universities and colleges had mining and mining en-  
6 gineer programs. Downstream segments, such as ore proc-  
7 essing, refining, and metallurgy, are affected by the same  
8 workforce trends. Institutions and personnel from allied  
9 countries with mining expertise can share their knowledge  
10 and experience with the United States workforce through  
11 education exchange programs.

12 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

13 The Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act  
14 of 1961 (Public Law 87–256; 22 U.S.C. 2451 et seq.) is  
15 amended by inserting after section 101 the following:

16 **“SEC. 101A. DEFINITIONS.**

17 “In this Act:

18 “(1) ADVANCED DEGREE.—The term ‘advanced  
19 degree’ means a degree from an institution of higher  
20 education that is a master’s or doctoral degree.

21 “(2) CRITICAL MINERAL.—The term ‘critical  
22 mineral’—

23 “(A) has the meaning given such term in  
24 section 7002(a)(3) of the Energy Act of 2020

1 (division Z of Public Law 116–260; 30 U.S.C.  
2 1606(a)(3)); and

3 “(B) includes gold, and copper, and any  
4 other mineral or mineral material the Secretary  
5 of State determines—

6 “(i) to be essential to the economic or  
7 national security of the United States; and  
8 “(ii) has a supply chain vulnerable to  
9 disruption.

10 “(3) EXCESS FOREIGN CURRENCIES.—The term  
11 ‘excess foreign currencies’ means foreign currencies,  
12 which, if acquired by the United States—

13 “(A) would be in excess of the normal re-  
14 quirements of departments, agencies, and em-  
15 bassies of the United States for such cur-  
16 rencies, as determined by the President; and

17 “(B) would be available for the use of the  
18 United States Government under applicable  
19 agreements with the foreign country concerned.

20 “(4) FEDERAL EMPLOYEE.—The term ‘Federal  
21 employee’—

22 “(A) means any employee described in sub-  
23 paragraphs (A) through (F) of section  
24 7342(a)(1) of title 5, United States Code; and

1                   “(B) does not include a person described  
2                   in subparagraph (G) of such section.

3                   “(5)           GOVERNMENT-SPONSORED           INTER-  
4                   NATIONAL EXCHANGES AND TRAINING.—The term  
5                   ‘Government-sponsored international exchanges and  
6                   training’ means the movement of people between  
7                   countries, financed wholly or in part with United  
8                   States Government funds—

9                     “(A) to promote the sharing of ideas;  
10                    “(B) to develop skills; and  
11                    “(C) to foster mutual understanding and  
12                    cooperation.

13                   “(6) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—  
14                   The term ‘institution of higher education’ has the  
15                   meaning given such term in section 101(a) of the  
16                   Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.  
17                   1001(a))).

1           “(9) MINING INDUSTRY.—The term ‘mining in-  
2        dustry’ means the mining industry of the United  
3        States, which consists of activities related to natu-  
4        rally occurring metal and nonmetal critical minerals,  
5        including—

6           “(A) geological mapping, geophysical sur-  
7        veying, geochemical sampling, and management  
8        of geological data;

9           “(B) mineral system analysis, exploration,  
10        and resource delineation, including exploratory  
11        drilling and resource estimation and classifica-  
12        tion;

13           “(C) project development, feasibility stud-  
14        ies, financing, and permitting;

15           “(D) mine construction, extraction, and  
16        operational support activities;

17           “(E) mineral processing, beneficiation,  
18        smelting, refining, chemical conversion, and  
19        separation;

20           “(F) material conversion and advanced  
21        materials manufacturing;

22           “(G) transportation, logistics, and han-  
23        dling of intermediate and finished material  
24        products; and

1                   “(H) reclamation, remediation, reuse, recycling,  
2                   and recovery of materials from primary  
3                   and secondary sources, including mine waste  
4                   and end-of-life products.

5                   “(10) MINING PROFESSION.—The term ‘mining  
6                   profession’ means the body of jobs directly related to  
7                   the mining industry.

8                   “(11) MINORITY SERVING INSTITUTION.—The  
9                   term ‘minority-serving institution’ means an eligible  
10                   institution under section 371(a) of the Higher Edu-  
11                   cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1067q(a)).”.

12 **SEC. 4. CRITICAL MINERAL MINING FELLOWSHIP PRO-**  
13                   **GRAM.**

14                   The Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act  
15                   of 1961, as amended by section 3, is further amended by  
16                   adding at the end the following:

17 **“SEC. 116. CRITICAL MINERAL MINING FELLOWSHIP PRO-**  
18                   **GRAM.**

19                   “(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is authorized to be es-  
20                   tablished the Critical Mineral Mining Fellowship Program  
21                   (referred to in this section as the ‘Fellowship Program’)  
22                   within the J. William Fulbright Educational Exchange  
23                   Program.

24                   “(b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of the Fellowship  
25                   Program are—

1               “(1) to advance foreign policy priorities of the  
2               United States by promoting studies, research, and  
3               international exchange in the mining industry;

4               “(2) to send United States students to mining  
5               institutions abroad to build the capacity of the  
6               United States mining workforce;

7               “(3) to develop a robust and skilled workforce  
8               that can support and fill the gaps of the United  
9               States’ growing domestic critical mineral supply  
10               chain; and

11               “(4) to reduce dependency on foreign energy  
12               and critical mineral supplies and enhance competi-  
13               tiveness of the United States within the global crit-  
14               ical mineral marketplace.

15               “(c) ADMINISTRATION.—The Bureau of Educational  
16               and Cultural Affairs of the Department of State (referred  
17               to in this section as the ‘Bureau’) shall administer the Fel-  
18               lowship Program in accordance with policy guidelines es-  
19               tablished by the Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board (re-  
20               ferred to in this section as the ‘Board’), in consultation  
21               with binational Fulbright Commissions, mining industry  
22               leaders, institutions of higher education, foreign govern-  
23               ments, and United States embassies in eligible countries.

24               “(d) SELECTION OF FELLOWS.—

1           “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Bureau shall deter-  
2       mine the number of fellows selected for the Fellow-  
3       ship Program each year. The Board shall select  
4       qualified individuals to participate in the Fellowship  
5       Program. In selecting the fellows, the Board should  
6       ensure geographic representation to ensure region-  
7       specific specialties are developed.

8           “(2) CRITERIA.—All fellows shall meet one of  
9       the following criteria:

10           “(A) Have a bachelor’s or equivalent de-  
11       gree conferred before participating in the Fel-  
12       lowship Program.

13           “(B) Be a student who is currently en-  
14       rolled in a United States institution of higher  
15       education and completing an advanced degree  
16       in the field of science, technology, engineering,  
17       or mathematics or a field related to the mining  
18       industry.

19           “(C) Have had a postdoctoral degree con-  
20       ferred during the 5-year period immediately  
21       preceding participation in the Fellowship Pro-  
22       gram.

23           “(3) REQUIRED INTENT.—Upon completing the  
24       Fellowship Program, each fellow shall demonstrate  
25       his or her intent to seek employment in a mining

1 profession that directly benefits the growth,  
2 progress, and development of the United States min-  
3 ing industry—

4 “(A) in the United States Government; or  
5 “(B) at a United States-based nongovern-  
6 mental organization, academic institution, pri-  
7 vate sector company, or other organization that  
8 has been approved by the Bureau.

9 “(4) ELIGIBLE UNIVERSITIES.—United States  
10 students shall attend universities approved by the  
11 Bureau, in consultation with the Committee on For-  
12 eign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on  
13 Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives,  
14 that have a mining education program and are lo-  
15 cated in a foreign country. To the extent practicable,  
16 the Bureau should prioritize enrollment in higher  
17 education mining programs in—

18 “(A) member countries in the Minerals Se-  
19 curity Partnership; or  
20 “(B) any additional countries identified by  
21 the Bureau, in consultation with the congres-  
22 sional committees referred to in this paragraph,  
23 as containing sufficiently qualified mining pro-  
24 grams.

1           “(5) OUTREACH.—To the extent practicable,  
2       the Bureau shall conduct outreach at United States  
3       undergraduate and graduate institutions the Bureau  
4       determines are likely to produce a range of qualified  
5       applicants to be sent abroad.

6       “(e) STRUCTURE.—

7           “(1) WORK PLAN.—To carry out the purposes  
8       described in subsection (b)—

9           “(A) each fellow selected pursuant to sub-  
10       section (d)(1) shall be encouraged to arrange  
11       placement in a mining education program at an  
12       eligible foreign university;

13           “(B) each fellow shall—

14           “(i) participate in advanced  
15       coursework, research projects, and prac-  
16       tical training opportunities, including in-  
17       ternships, offered by the host institution;

18           “(ii) engage with faculty advisors and  
19       industry partners to gain hands-on experi-  
20       ence through internships, laboratory work,  
21       and field studies relevant to the mining in-  
22       dustry;

23           “(iii) serve as a cultural and academic  
24       ambassador of the United States by fos-  
25       tering mutual understanding within the

1 host country's academic and professional  
2 mining community;

12                   “(C) the Bureau shall, for each fellow, ap-  
13                   prove a work plan that identifies the target ob-  
14                   jectives for the fellow, including specific duties  
15                   and responsibilities relating to such objectives.

16                   “(2) FELLOWSHIP PERIOD.—

17                   “(A) IN GENERAL.—Each fellowship under  
18                   this section shall continue for a period deter-  
19                   mined by the Bureau, which, whenever feasible,  
20                   shall not be shorter than 1 year.

21                   “(B) RENEWAL.—The Bureau may grant  
22                   a renewal for a second year, in consultation  
23                   with the relevant United States embassy or  
24                   Fulbright Commission.

1       “(f) FELLOWSHIP AWARD.—The Bureau shall pro-  
2 vide each fellow under this section with an allowance equal  
3 to the amount needed for the fellow’s reasonable costs dur-  
4 ing the fellowship period, including—

5           “(1) mandatory university fees, including tui-  
6 tion, associated with his or her studies;

7           “(2) living expenses, including housing, basic  
8 food costs, and daily transportation;

9           “(3) essential textbooks and other academic  
10 materials;

11           “(4) mandatory visa application, immigration  
12 fees, and other essential pre-departure requirements;

13           “(5) relocation expenses, including travel by air  
14 or by rail;

15           “(6) a research allowance, including essential  
16 travel to field sites and laboratory work; and

17           “(7) other reasonable costs approved by the Bu-  
18 reau.

19       “(g) ANNUAL REPORTS.—Not later than 1 year after  
20 the completion of the Fellowship Program by the initial  
21 cohort of fellows selected pursuant to subsection (d), and  
22 annually thereafter, the Secretary of State shall submit  
23 a report to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the  
24 Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the  
25 House of Representatives that includes information re-

1 garding the implementation of the Fellowship Program,  
2 including—

3                   “(1) the demographics and geographical origins  
4                   of the cohort of fellows who completed a fellowship  
5                   during the reporting period;

6                   “(2) a description of academic placements se-  
7                   lected and their relation to the development of the  
8                   United States region-specific specialties under the  
9                   Fellowship Program, including participant feedback  
10                  on program implementation and lessons learned; and

11               “(3) a plan for factoring lessons learned and  
12               acquired skills based knowledge into future program-  
13               ming.”.

14 SEC. 5. CRITICAL MINERAL MINING EDUCATIONAL EX-  
15 CHANGE ACT OF 2025.

16        The Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act  
17 of 1961, as amended by sections 3 and 4, is further  
18 amended by adding at the end the following:

## 19 "SEC. 117. VISITING MINING SCHOLARS PROGRAM.

20        "(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is authorized to be es-  
21 tablished the Visiting Mining Scholars Program (referred  
22 to in this section as the 'Visiting Scholars Program') with-  
23 in the J. William Fulbright Educational Exchange Pro-  
24 gram.

1       “(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the Visiting Schol-  
2 ars Program is to bring mining academics and profes-  
3 sionals to the United States—

4       “(1) to build and expand United States mining  
5 education programs at institutions of higher edu-  
6 cation;

7       “(2) to bolster workforce development pro-  
8 grams; and

9       “(3) to advance research and development ini-  
10 tiatives in the mining industry and adjacent fields.

11       “(c) ADMINISTRATION.—The Bureau of Educational  
12 and Cultural Affairs of the Department of State (referred  
13 to in this section as the ‘Bureau’) shall administer the Vis-  
14 iting Scholars Program in accordance with policy guide-  
15 lines established by the Fulbright Foreign Scholarship  
16 Board (referred to in this section as the ‘Board’), in con-  
17 sultation with binational Fulbright Commissions, mining  
18 industry leaders, institutions of higher education, foreign  
19 governments, and United States embassies in eligible  
20 countries.

21       “(d) SELECTION OF VISITING MINING SCHOLARS.—

22       “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Board shall select  
23 qualified individuals to participate in the Visiting  
24 Scholars Program, who shall be foreign nationals  
25 who are currently employed—

1                 “(A) outside of the United States as min-  
2                 ing professionals, practitioners, or operators; or  
3                 “(B) as academics working at institutions  
4                 of higher education in foreign countries with  
5                 mining education programs approved by a Ful-  
6                 bright Commission or United States embassy,  
7                 in consultation with the Committee on Foreign  
8                 Relations of the Senate and the Committee on  
9                 Foreign Affairs of the House of Representa-  
10                 tives.

11                 “(2) NUMBER OF FELLOWS.—The Bureau may  
12                 determine the number of fellows selected each year,  
13                 which, whenever feasible, shall not be fewer than 10.

14                 “(3) ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA.—Each visiting  
15                 mining scholar shall be a foreign national of a coun-  
16                 try—

17                 “(A) in which an existing Fulbright For-  
18                 eign Student Program operates; and

19                 “(B) that has expertise, specialized knowl-  
20                 edge, or engages in practices that could benefit  
21                 the United States mining industry.

22                 “(4) PREFERRED COUNTRIES.—To the extent  
23                 practicable, the Bureau shall prioritize the selection  
24                 of visiting mining scholars who live or work in—

1                   “(A) a Member country in the Minerals  
2                   Security Partnership; or

3                   “(B) any additional country identified by  
4                   the Bureau, in consultation with the Committee  
5                   on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the  
6                   Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of  
7                   Representatives, as containing individuals who  
8                   have academic expertise, specialized knowledge,  
9                   or engage in practices that could benefit the  
10                   United States mining industry.

11                   “(5) OUTREACH.—To the extent practicable,  
12                   the Bureau shall conduct outreach in coordination  
13                   with appropriate United States embassies, mining  
14                   industry leaders, and mining institutions abroad that  
15                   are likely to produce a range of qualified applicants  
16                   to come to the United States.

17                   “(e) STRUCTURE.—

18                   “(1) WORK PLAN.—To carry out the purposes  
19                   described in subsection (b)—

20                   “(A) each individual selected pursuant to  
21                   subsection (d)(1) who is coming to the United  
22                   States as a visiting mining scholar—

23                   “(i) shall arrange placement in a  
24                   United States academic institution ap-  
25                   proved by the Bureau; and

1                     “(ii) should—

2                     “(I) consult with faculty mem-  
3                     bers to provide technical assistance on  
4                     how to develop or expand a mining  
5                     education program at the host institu-  
6                     tion of higher education;

7                     “(II) assist in the development  
8                     and review of mining education cur-  
9                     ricula, including course syllabi, labora-  
10                    tory modules, and fieldwork compo-  
11                    nents;

12                    “(III) participate in collaborative  
13                    research projects with faculty, stu-  
14                    dents, and third-party research insti-  
15                    tutions focusing on innovative mining  
16                    technologies, sustainable mining prac-  
17                    tices, and resource management;

18                    “(IV) facilitate partnerships be-  
19                    tween the host institution and mining  
20                    organizations, government agencies,  
21                    and other institutions to foster aca-  
22                    demic exchange, research collabora-  
23                    tion, and workforce development;

24                    “(V) mentor undergraduate and  
25                    graduate students interested in min-

4 “(VI) contribute to the develop-  
5 ment of outreach programs aimed at  
6 increasing awareness of the mining in-  
7 dustry as a career path and to in-  
8 crease awareness of the types of min-  
9 ing professions available; and

10                   “(B) the Bureau shall approve a work plan  
11                   for each scholar that identifies the target objec-  
12                   tives for the scholar, including specific duties  
13                   and responsibilities relating to such objectives.

14               “(2) ELIGIBLE UNITED STATES INSTITU-  
15               TIONS.—Visiting mining scholars shall be placed in  
16               an institution of higher education approved by the  
17               Bureau that—

18                   “(A) demonstrates a commitment to devel-  
19                   oping or expanding academic programs in the  
20                   mining industry;

21                   “(B) possesses existing faculty expertise or  
22                   research activity in the mining industry or re-  
23                   lated extractive fields;

24                   “(C) provides institutional support and re-  
25                   sources, such as laboratory facilities, field sites,

1           or equipment, relevant to mining education and  
2           research, including in geology;

3           “(D) demonstrates a commitment to inte-  
4           grate the visiting scholar into curriculum devel-  
5           opment, faculty training, or workforce pipeline  
6           initiatives in mining;

7           “(E) demonstrates a plan for sustaining  
8           mining or critical mineral resources programs  
9           beyond the duration of the visiting scholar’s  
10           placement;

11           “(F) shows evidence of student interest or  
12           regional workforce demand for mining edu-  
13           cation programs or training; and

14           “(G) agrees to provide mentoring, adminis-  
15           trative support, and opportunities for the vis-  
16           iting scholar to engage with students, faculty,  
17           and local industry.

18           “(3) SCHOLARSHIP PERIOD.—

19           “(A) IN GENERAL.—Each scholarship  
20           awarded under this section shall continue for a  
21           period determined by the Bureau, which, when-  
22           ever feasible, shall not be longer than 1 year  
23           and not shorter than 3 months.

24           “(B) EXCEPTIONS.—Any request for an  
25           exception to the duration of the scholarship pe-

1           riod described in subparagraph (A) shall be  
2           submitted by the visiting mining scholar and  
3           approved by the Bureau before such exception  
4           takes effect.

5           “(f) SCHOLARSHIP AWARD.—The Bureau shall pro-  
6           vide each visiting mining scholar under this section with  
7           an allowance to cover the scholar’s reasonable costs of liv-  
8           ing during the scholarship period.

9           “(g) ANNUAL REPORTS.—Not later than 1 year after  
10          the completion of the Visiting Scholars Program by the  
11          initial cohort of scholars selected pursuant to subsection  
12          (d)(1), and annually thereafter, the Secretary of State  
13          shall submit a report to the Committee on Foreign Rela-  
14          tions of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs  
15          of the House of Representatives that includes information  
16          on the implementation of the Visiting Scholars Program,  
17          including—

18           “(1) the demographics and geographical origins  
19          of the cohort of scholars who completed a Visiting  
20          Scholars Program during the reporting period;

21           “(2) the United States universities at which vis-  
22          iting scholars were placed;

23           “(3) the foreign universities or other post-grad-  
24          uate institutions from which the cohort of visiting  
25          scholars were chosen;

1                   “(4) a description of academic placements se-  
2                   lected under the Visiting Scholars Program, includ-  
3                   ing participant feedback on program implementation  
4                   and lessons learned; and

5               “(5) a plan for factoring lessons learned into  
6               future programming.”.

7 SEC. 6. TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS TO  
8 THE MUTUAL EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL  
9 EXCHANGE ACT OF 1961.

10        The Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act  
11 of 1961 (Public Law 87-256; 22 U.S.C. 2451 et seq.) is  
12 amended—

15 (2) in section 108A(a) (22 U.S.C. 2458a(a))—

16 (A) by striking “(1)” before Congress:

17 (B) by striking paragraph (2); and

18 (C) by redesignating subparagraphs (A),  
19 (B), and (C) as paragraph (1), (2), and (3), re-  
20 spectively;

21 (3) in section 112 (22 U.S.C. 2460)—

22 (A) in subsection (a)—

23 (i) in paragraph (9), by striking  
24 “and” at the end;

12           “(12) the Critical Mineral Mining Fellowship  
13           Program established pursuant to section 116, which  
14           provides funding for studies, research, and inter-  
15           national exchange for students seeking to complete  
16           degrees from institutions of higher education in self-  
17           arranged placements with universities with mining  
18           education programs in foreign countries; and

19           “(13) the Visiting Mining Scholars Program es-  
20           tablished pursuant to section 117, which provides  
21           funding for international mining academics, practi-  
22           tioners, professionals and operators in self-arranged  
23           placements with universities in the United States.”;  
24           and

25 (B) in subsection (g)—

1 (i) by striking paragraph (2);  
2 (ii) by redesignating paragraphs (3)  
3 through (11) as paragraphs (2) through  
4 (10), respectively; and

5 (iii) in paragraph (10), as redesignated, by striking “paragraph (6)” and inserting “paragraph (5); and

6

7

8 (4) in section 115(d)(2) (22 U.S.C.

9 2465(d)(2))—

10 (A) by striking subparagraph (B);

11 (B) in subparagraph (A)—

12 (i) by striking “(A) IN GENERAL.—”;

13 and

14 (ii) by redesignating clauses (i) and

15 (ii) as subparagraphs (A) and (B), and

16 moving such clauses 2 ems to the left.

## 17 SEC. 7. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

18 There is authorized to be appropriated to the Depart-  
19 ment of State \$10,000,000 for each of the fiscal years  
20 2026 through 2035 for the purpose of carrying out the  
21 Critical Mineral Mining Fellowship Program and the Vis-  
22 iting Mining Scholars Program established pursuant to  
23 sections 116 and 117 of the Mutual Educational and Cul-  
24 tural Exchange Act of 1961, as added by sections 4 and  
25 5.

**1 SEC. 8. SUNSET.**

2        This Act, and the amendments made by this Act,  
3 shall cease to have effect beginning on the date that is  
4 10 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.