



Advocacy Alert:

AFS Advocacy Helps Secure Copper's Addition to U.S. Critical Minerals List

THE ISSUE

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) released the Final 2025 List of Critical Minerals, expanding the list to 60 minerals and adding 10 new entries, most notably copper for the first time. The Critical Minerals List, created in 2018, identifies minerals essential to U.S. economic and national security that face supply chain vulnerabilities. Copper's absence from previous lists had become increasingly concerning as U.S. imports continued to rise and China solidified its dominance in global copper mining and refining. With demand for copper accelerating across manufacturing, infrastructure, and defense, its vulnerable supply chain posed significant risks to U.S. competitiveness and resilience.

AFS ADVOCACY

AFS has long urged federal agencies and policymakers to recognize copper as a Critical Mineral due to its strategic importance and supply risks. Through comments, congressional meetings, and industry coalition efforts, AFS emphasized the essential role of copper-alloy castings in defense, energy, and transportation, and highlighted the growing pressure on domestic supply. AFS consistently underscored how U.S. manufacturers depend on reliable access to this material. AFS advocacy reinforced the need for the federal government to respond proactively to tightening global markets and ensure long-term stability for American industry.

THE POSITIVE OUTCOME

In November 2025, USGS officially added copper to the Final 2025 Critical Minerals List, a major step forward for U.S. manufacturers and the metalcasting industry. Copper's new designation brings greater federal attention, encourages domestic investment, and strengthens policy support aimed at expanding American based supply. "USGS' announcement is an important step in the right direction that will accelerate progress in bringing more copper supply online in the U.S. in face of surging demand," said AFS CEO Doug Kurkul. With copper now formally recognized as critical, AFS members stand to benefit from improved supply chain stability and strengthened national competitiveness.