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Organization:

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Comments: I am writing to express my support for South32's Hermosa project as the only advanced mine development project in the United States that could produce two federally designated critical minerals - manganese and zinc - both of which are essential minerals for powering the nation's clean energy future.

My Name is Leon Punt. I work for Copper State Bolt & Nut Co. as the Regional Vice President for the Heavy Industrial/Mining. I am also involved with the AMIGOS Mining Association as a Board Member. Copper State Bolt & Nut Co. (CSBN) has two locations in the region with a total of about 55 employees and their families in our locations in Nogales, Az. & Tucson AZ. which will definitely benefit from this project. This project (Hermosa Critical Minerals Project) will allow CSBN to not only provide Hardware to South 32, the actual Mine Site, along with all of the Contractors on site.

In addition, Hermosa will help to transform and grow the local economy, creating good-paying jobs so the next generation have opportunities to stay in Santa Cruz County. South32 recently made a \$2.16 billion investment in Southern Arizona, representing the largest private investment in the local economy to date. Hermosa will create more than 900 family-sustaining jobs, with each job generating an average income of \$90,000 annually - over double the average household income in the county today.

Hermosa is being designed from the ground up with advanced technology and monitoring systems to deliver on the company's sustainability commitments and in response to community interests. With a total footprint of 750 acres, it's a fraction of the footprint of open-pit mines and even other underground mines, and its water use intensity is 75% less than other mines in the region.

In addition, Hermosa will strengthen our domestic supply of critical minerals to reduce our reliance on foreign sources, reduce overall greenhouse gas emissions by removing the need to transport these materials abroad, and combat human rights risks by producing these materials safely and sustainably here in the United States with strong labor and environmental protections. Right now, the US is 100% reliant on foreign sources for manganese and produces just 6% of the world's zinc at a single mine in Alaska that is nearing the end of its service life. Hermosa has the potential to responsibly boost our nation's critical mineral security.

Thank you for your consideration of our views as the Hermosa project's NEPA process continues.

Leon Punt

Copper State Bolt & Nut Co.