



# Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy

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## **Statement on HR 3115 Testimony at House Subcommittee Hearing**

Representative Richard Nolan testified in favor of HR 3115 at the House Subcommittee on Federal Lands today. His testimony contained information that should be corrected and supplemented.

First, Rep. Nolan said the land exchange PolyMet seeks is a good deal for taxpayers, and that the land PolyMet seeks is in an “active mining area.” The 6,650 acres of Superior National Forest land that PolyMet would receive has never been mined. It contains thousands of acres of critical wetlands in the headwaters of the St. Louis River. The appraisal that set the value of this land at just \$550 / acre was the direct result of an instruction given to the appraiser that he should not include the value that this land has for the development of a mine. That’s clearly a mistake. It is fundamental to land valuation that appraisals be based on the actual use of the land. That’s the reason that Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy has asked the courts to examine the land exchange. If this land was fairly valued, taxpayers and public land users would receive much more public land in the exchange.

Second, Rep. Nolan stated the Soo Locks connecting Lake Superior to the rest of the Great Lakes are important to the U.S. economy. As the *Cook County News-Herald* reported in 2010, PolyMet does not intend to transport minerals through the Great Lakes. Therefore, development of the NorthMet mine would have no impact on the Soo Locks.

Third, Rep. Nolan cited the value of minerals that PolyMet would mine for U.S. national security. PolyMet is a Canadian company whose largest shareholder is Glencore, a Swiss commodities conglomerate. Glencore owns the first five years of minerals produced if PolyMet receives permits, financing, and begins operation. If minerals produced by PolyMet are essential for U.S. national security, they should not be sold to foreign corporations to be shipped overseas for processing into metals.

Kathryn Hoffman, Executive Director of the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy, issued the following statement:

**“HR 3115 would set a dangerous precedent for public lands in Minnesota. Court review of the PolyMet land exchange protects taxpayers and public land users. Public land users and taxpayers deserve equal value when public land is given to a private business. Rep. Nolan should withdraw HR 3115 and let the courts do their job.”**

The Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy submitted written testimony to the House Subcommittee on Federal Lands. The testimony was entered into the record and is available upon request.

***The Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy** is a nonprofit organization using law, science, and research to protect Minnesota's natural resources, wildlife and the health of its people.*

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