

January 25, 2024

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden,

I write with alarm regarding yesterday's announcement that Magnitude 7 Metals—a primary aluminum manufacturer based in Marston, Missouri—has shut down production at its aluminum smelter. Not only is this development a devastating blow to working families and good-paying union jobs in my state, but it directly threatens the national economic security of the United States. This smelter accounts for nearly 30 percent of the nation's primary aluminum production. I urge you to take the appropriate actions necessary to keep the smelter open, to ensure the continuity of operations, and to preserve production jobs—including by deploying the authorities of the *Defense Production Act of 1950*.

Magnitude 7 Metals' "curtailment" of its aluminum smelter will put more than 500 workers out of a job by Sunday, January 28, 2024. The impending shutdown of the smelter will also materially degrade our defense posture, as the Department of Defense has deemed aluminum a strategic material of interest.

Magnitude 7 Metals is one of three primary aluminum manufacturers in the United States and operates one of handful of active smelters nationwide. Its annual production capacity is 263,000 metric tons, which accounts for almost 30 percent of the nation's overall capacity, according to some estimates. As you know, primary aluminum is used in various industrial goods, including aircraft, automobiles, solar panels, and many types of military equipment. The Department of Defense has deemed aluminum a strategic material of interest mainly because of the latter.

Primary aluminum production has declined in the United States during the past two decades—catastrophically. As recently as 2000, the United States ranked as the world's largest producer of primary aluminum. However, the United States now accounts for less than 2 percent of global primary aluminum. This steep production decline results from several factors, including state-led overproduction in China that has led Chinese aluminum manufacturers to dump subsidized aluminum into global markets, thereby depressing the commodity's price and undermining U.S. manufacturers' financial viability.

The precipitous decline of the primary aluminum industry and the importance of aluminum for U.S. national security informed the Trump Administration's decision to impose 10 percent tariffs on aluminum products, pursuant to Section 232 of the *Trade Expansion Act of 1962*. However, in the past 18 months, two other primary aluminum smelters have been curtailed, one in Washington

and another in Kentucky. The curtailment of Magnitude 7 Metal's smelter makes a third. It's clear more must be done to stabilize and revitalize the nation's primary aluminum industry.

To this end, I urge you to take all appropriate actions, including invocation of the *Defense Production Act of 1950*, to prevent the shutdown of Magnitude 7 Metals. Doing so will preserve good-paying union jobs and safeguard national security.

I look forward to your prompt attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Josh Hawley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "J".

Josh Hawley
United States Senator