

CITY OF PALM DESERT

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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

The Honorable Ken Calvert
U.S. House of Representatives
73710 Fred Waring Drive, Suite 129
Palm Desert, CA 92260

**Re: University of California, Riverside, Fiscal Year 2024/25 Community Project Funding (CPF)
Request for the Critical Minerals Characterization Laboratory - SUPPORT**

Dear Representative Calvert:

On behalf of the City of Palm Desert, I am writing to express support for the 2024-2025 Community Project Funding (CPF) request of \$1 million in building renovation funds to establish a Critical Minerals Characterization Laboratory on the University of California, Riverside (UCR) Palm Desert campus to help meet the needs of strategic boron, rare earth element and lithium (B, REE and Li) industries located in the Mojave Desert and Lithium Valley regions of Southern California.

Due to the demand for electric vehicles and renewable energy storage systems, the worldwide lithium-battery market is expected to grow by a factor of 5 to 10 in the next decade. In the National Blueprint for Lithium Batteries, developed by the Federal Consortium for Advanced Batteries, their vision for lithium-battery supply chain states, "By 2030, the United States and its partners will establish a secure battery materials and technology supply chain that supports long-term U.S. economic competitiveness and equitable job creation, enables decarbonization, advances social justice, and meets national security requirements." Similar market trends and competitive opportunities apply to magnet components and their supply chains involving multifaceted energy and defense applications.

An investment in UCR's Palm Desert Critical Minerals Characterization Laboratory will help to achieve this vision and will serve as a first step in establishing a strong academic-industry partnership program in Southern California, including opportunities to train and develop the workforce needed to sustain a strong domestic critical minerals supply chain.

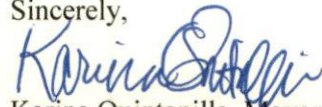
UCR's close proximity to the Mojave Desert and Salton Sea, faculty expertise, access to talent, and community relationships make the university an ideal partner for industry. Instead of sending samples to other states for analysis, characterization and certification, UCR will partner closely with companies like ours to gather data essential to the development and day-to-day operations of critical minerals extraction and processing. This will be both a time and cost-savings for companies. A new generation of students will also be trained in scientific critical minerals-based work through hands-on and experiential learning opportunities at the facility and in mines and geothermal fields. The facility will also support training for K-12 teachers to help them incorporate critical minerals into their STEM curricula. With formal training, students can look forward to good paying jobs in both the public and private sectors in mineral and energy resources, such as the B-REE-Li industry; environmental sciences; and positions in the health sciences.

We believe that establishing the UCR Critical Minerals Characterization Laboratory will help to strengthen our domestic critical minerals and battery/magnet supply chains, as well as provide a wide range of

economic and employment opportunities for underserved communities in and around the Southern California region.

The City of Palm Desert is committed to advancing higher education in the Coachella Valley as we continue our effort to grow CSU Palm Desert. For those reasons, the City of Palm Desert respectfully urge you to give this proposal full and fair consideration. If you have any questions regarding our support, please do not hesitate to contact the City Manager, Todd Hileman, at (760) 346-0611 or email thileman@palmdesert.gov.

Sincerely,



Karina Quintanilla, Mayor
City of Palm Desert