REGINA ROMERO
TUCSON MAYOR

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November 3, 2026

The Honorable Mark Kelly
1661 N. Swan Rd., Suite 238
Tucson, Arizona 85712

Re: The City of Tucson's Opposition to the Mining Regulatory Clarity Act and Related Provisions in BAAJA

Dear Senator Kelly:

I am writing to urge you to oppose legislation that would enable mining companies to use federal public lands by right and at the expense of all other uses. The Bipartisan American Affordability and Jobs Act (BAAJA) incorporates language first introduced in 2023 under the Mining Regulatory Clarity Act and a related act. In response, the City of Tucson adopted Resolution 23626 in June 2023, opposing the Mining Regulatory Clarity Act, the Mining Needs Act, and similar legislation that would facilitate mining operations at the expense of protecting the Santa Rita Mountains. The resolution also called on our congressional delegation to oppose these measures and supported meaningful mining reform through legislation such as the Clean Energy Minerals Reform Act.

For the people of Tucson, opposition to this legislation is even more relevant today than in previous years. Last week, the Canadian and Japanese owners of the Copper World Project released a definitive feasibility study stating their intention to expand their proposed copper mine onto Coronado National Forest lands within 10 years, pending federal legislation like this. This Act is intended to overturn the decision by the United States District Court for the District of Arizona, upheld by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, that halted construction of the proposed Rosemont Mine on the eastern slopes of the Santa Rita Mountains in Pima County, upstream of Tucson, and specifically the dumping of waste rock and tailings on thousands of acres of the Coronado National Forest.

The City of Tucson continues to oppose large-scale open-pit copper mining in the Santa Rita Mountains due to the irreparable harm it will cause to the significant natural and cultural resources of the area, as well as the severe impacts to water resources in two watersheds. One of these watersheds is the sole source of water for residents in the Sahuarita and Green Valley communities, and it is already experiencing water level declines and areas of subsidence. The Santa Rita Mountains are also home to endangered species and sensitive ecosystems that would face lasting harm from mining operations. The potential contamination of our water resources from mining waste,

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including heavy metals and toxic chemicals, poses additional risks to our aquifers and public health. With the ongoing drought and growing pressures on our regional water supplies, protecting these resources remains a priority for the City of Tucson.

Our opposition to the Copper World Project is longstanding. In addition to our 2023 resolution, I opposed the Central Arizona Project Board's 2022 decision to allow water storage associated with the Rosemont Mine, recognizing the concerns raised by the Tohono O'odham Nation, the Pascua Yaqui Tribe, and numerous environmental organizations regarding the project's impacts on our region's natural and cultural resources.

The City of Tucson is not anti-mining; we recognize the importance of copper production to our regional economy and maintain relationships with the mining industry. The City has long advocated for meaningful mining reform, acknowledging that mining is necessary and should occur in places and with methods that protect the health, safety, and welfare of Tucson residents. We continue to seek comprehensive mining reform akin to the comprehensive, science-based, and community-informed conservation planning undertaken by our local community and federal agencies that resulted in the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan, a plan celebrating its 25th anniversary this year.

Please oppose stand-alone legislation or similar provisions being incorporated into other legislation, such as the BAAJA, that allow by right such irreversible impacts on our public lands, waters, and communities.

In community,



Mayor Regina Romero
City of Tucson, AZ