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[EXTERNAL EMAIL]



NEWS RELEASE

Protecting Ontario's Critical Minerals and Energy Sector

New legislation will safeguard Canadian mining resources and energy infrastructure from foreign interference

April 25, 2025

[Ministry of Energy and Mines](#)

THUNDER BAY — As part of the government's plan to protect Ontario, the province is introducing new measures to prevent foreign governments or corporations from claiming Ontario's critical minerals or participating in the province's energy sector. Today, Stephen Lecce, Minister of Energy and Mines, along with Kevin Holland, MPP for Thunder Bay-Atikokan announced details from the *Protect Ontario by Unleashing our Economy Act*. The proposed legislation will safeguard Ontario's critical mining resources and energy infrastructure from hostile foreign actors and regimes, creating conditions that will attract investment and make Ontario's and Canada's economy more resilient and self-reliant.

"Canadian resources ought to benefit Canadians, not hostile, foreign regimes," said Minister Lecce. "In today's changing world, we need to be clear-eyed about the risks from those who want to exploit our resource bounty. That is why it is essential that Ontario is protecting our critical minerals and energy sector from getting into the wrong hands. Our government is taking action to secure our supply chains, from exploration to extraction, to ensure Canadian interests, jobs, and sovereignty always prevail."

Currently, there are no safeguards in place to prevent adversarial foreign governments or corporations or bad actors from claiming critical minerals or participating in the energy sector in Ontario. This means that foreign entities can stake claim to mineral-rich deposits without the intention of harvesting them for the benefit of Ontarians or Canadians.

“Ontario is taking important actions to protect our mining and energy assets during this volatile time,” said MPP Kevin Holland. “This is especially important for Northern Ontario, as critical mineral and mining resources are an integral part of our economy. This legislation will ensure they remain a commodity that supports our workforce and livelihood.”

The *Protect Ontario by Unleashing our Economy Act* seeks to preserve and prioritize access to the province’s critical minerals and energy sector by creating new measures that will allow the government to suspend or remove a registrant from the Mining Lands Administration System (MLAS) or suspend the MLAS system itself. It would also give the government the ability to deny the transfer or lease of a mining claim, or when necessary, revoke a mining claim registration or terminate a lease.

New measures will also be taken to protect Ontario’s essential energy usage by foreign state-owned or based companies by limiting the participation of specified foreign jurisdictions or entities in Ontario’s energy sector. This aims to protect our energy systems from risks including malware, manipulation, tampering, surveillance, potential ratepayer harm, and other threats posed by foreign state-owned or based companies seeking to compromise essential services.

Quick Facts

- The 2021 report ‘Foreign Interference Threats to Canada’s Democratic Process’ specifically noted that Canada’s abundance of natural resources makes it a target for foreign interference.
- Ontario is one of the most mineral rich areas in the entire world. This includes minerals such as nickel, titanium, cobalt and lithium which cell phones, computers, medical devices, energy and electric vehicles rely on.
- Ontario’s electricity grid is one of the cleanest in the world with a diverse supply mix made up of nuclear, hydroelectric, natural gas, wind, solar and bioenergy.
- As part of its plan to protect Ontario, the province introduced the *Protect Ontario by Unleashing Our Economy Act, 2025* on April 17, which would cut red tape and streamline approvals to speed up critical mineral and resource development projects, including in the Ring of Fire.

Quotes

"The Government of Ontario’s work in protecting our critical minerals and mining resources will help maintain and create high-quality jobs in Thunder Bay and Northwestern Ontario. As mining and energy development continue to drive growth, we look forward to the additional protections and safeguards which will help Ontario companies enhance our role as leaders in the mining and energy sectors."

- Mayor Ken Boshcoff
City of Thunder Bay

"The Government of Ontario's strategic action to protect its critical mineral sector is a clear signal to responsible investors and operators: the province is ready to lead in securing the clean energy future. We support this legislation as a catalyst for investment and a foundation for building resilient, made-in-Ontario supply chains. As Rock Tech Lithium advances our lithium projects, we remain committed to working in partnership with Indigenous communities and local stakeholders to ensure this growth is inclusive, responsible, and sustainable."

- Dirk Harbecke
Chief Executive Officer and Chairman, Rock Tech Lithium

"Avalon has long encouraged governments at all levels to modernize regulatory policies that accelerate mining project development without compromising integrity. The Ontario government's introduction of the Protect Ontario by Unleashing Our Economy Act is a welcome and important step toward eliminating unnecessary red tape. Premier Ford and Minister Lecce are helping to create the conditions for projects like Avalon's Lake Superior Lithium Facility (the "LSLi Facility") in Thunder Bay to be built faster—unlocking job creation, economic opportunity and advancing Ontario's leadership in critical minerals."

- Scott Monteith
President and Chief Executive Officer, Avalon Advanced Materials Inc.

Additional Resources

[Ontario Unleashing Economic Potential of Critical Mineral and Resource Development](#)

[Speech from the Throne – Protect Ontario](#)

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