

February 14, 2025

Honorable Senator Blakespear
California State Senator
State Capitol Rm 6640
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for SB 235 (McNerney) – [Critical Mineral Recycling]

Dear Senator Blakespear,

The California Product Stewardship Council (CPSC) supports **SB 235 (McNerney)**. This bill will jumpstart the creation of a new market in California for recapturing critical minerals and rare earth metals from old batteries, cellphones, and other electronics and reusing them for our own clean energy industry. This will result in community resilience through reusing valuable materials to generate energy and jobs.

CPSC piloted the first CalRecycle funded solar panel reuse and recycling projects in the state. In 2024, the Department of Energy awarded CPSC with the American Made Challenge Prize for setting up solar panel reuse hubs throughout the state. Through these projects, we've found the average age of solar panels entering local government recycling programs is 9.1 years, with several decades of energy capacity and GHG reduction potential left in their useful life. The solar panel reuse hubs are just getting started with great support and feedback from residents and businesses. With more communities joining the solar panel reuse hubs and educating about reuse opportunities, the State will benefit from establishing a baseline through the measures proposed in **SB 235 (McNerney)**.

California's clean energy sector is the largest in the nation and provides more than a half-million jobs. Yet much of the clean energy manufacturing depends on critical minerals, including lithium, cobalt, and others, that are mined and extracted in processes that harm the environment and are carbon-intensive. Currently, the U.S. is overly reliant on foreign imports for critical minerals. As the demand for critical minerals increases across numerous industries and the future of U.S. trade relations remains uncertain, California must find environmentally friendly paths to boost supply in-state. **SB 235 (McNerney)** will require the Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery to submit a report to the Legislature on the collection, recycling, reuse, and stockpiling of critical minerals, and allows the Department to make recommendations to California industries on the best practices for recycling these valuable materials.

Thank you for your leadership in this important measure. We strongly urge your "**AYE**" vote on **SB 235 (McNerney)**.

Respectfully,



Joanne Brasch, PhD
Director of Advocacy