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January 11, 2000

Ms. Mari-Ann Green
Formation Capital Corporation
612 Shoup Street
Salmon, Idaho 83467

Dear Ms. Green,

Thank you for your inquiry regarding the importance of mining in Idaho.

Mining is a basic economic activity which supplies the strategic metals and minerals that are essential for agriculture, construction and manufacturing. As such, the United States has a fundamental interest in maintaining a healthy mining industry. The United States is among the world's largest producers of many important metals and minerals, particularly copper, gold, iron, lead, molybdenum, silver, and zinc, and still has substantial domestic reserves of these metals. Approximately 65 large mines account for most of the nation's production of these metals.

While it is true that regulations can be burdensome, this is an unfortunate reality for any industry. It would certainly be a shame if businessmen were discouraged from investing in mining due to the threat of government regulations. Idaho is blessed with vast mineral reserves, and there are many opportunities to develop profitable new mines.

You can rest assured that I will do everything in my power to ensure that federal policy allows for a robust and environmentally sound mining industry. I want to personally wish you the best of luck in the profitable business of mining.

Very sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Helen".

Helen Chenoweth-Hage
Member of Congress

HPC\dk