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Comment from Haney, Kalisse

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The development of U.S.-led efforts in deep sea mining represents a significant opportunity for economic growth and technological advancement. Critical minerals found in the deep ocean are essential components of clean energy technologies, including electric vehicle batteries, solar panels, and wind turbines. As the global demand for sustainable energy increases, positioning the United States as a leader in responsible deep-sea mineral exploration could generate a multi-billion-dollar industry and create high-quality jobs across multiple sectors.

The proposed regulatory updates including transitioning from paper based to online application submissions are a welcome improvement. This digital shift will help streamline administrative processes, reduce inefficiencies, and make the permitting system more accessible to qualified applicants. Regarding the proposed \$350,000 application fee, it is important to view this figure in the proper context. Starting a deep sea mining venture requires substantial capital investment, often involving millions of dollars in equipment and technology. When weighed against the potential economic upside of a successful operation, \$350,000 is a reasonable and proportionate amount. Furthermore, these funds support NOAA's administrative functions, environmental assessments, and compliance oversight, all of which are necessary to ensure safe and sustainable operations.

Overall, this proposed rule reflects a forward-thinking approach to regulating an emerging industry with tremendous potential. I support its direction and encourage NOAA to continue refining policies that promote both economic opportunity and environmental responsibility.

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