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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Jewelers of America Supports Congressional Action on Mining Law Reform

House of Representatives is expected to vote October 31 on H.R. 2262

New York, NY – Jewelers of America (JA) has delivered a letter to members of the House of Representatives, urging them to vote affirmatively on October 31 for H.R. 2262, The Hardrock Mining and Reclamation Act of 2007.

“A successful vote will mean Congress is one step closer to reforming the outdated Mining Law of 1872,” says JA President and CEO Matthew A. Runci. “Our members have a direct stake in a healthy, profitable and responsible mining sector in the United States, and this legislation is a meaningful step forward in reaching that goal.”

In his letter on behalf of JA, Runci wrote: “Jewelers of America supports the enhanced viability of mining companies that produce jewelry’s raw materials, but our members also realize that the current Mining Law does not address the considerable impact of mining on watersheds, wildlife or local communities. Failure to modernize the law has proven expensive to Americans and to our environment. JA members see reforms as both necessary and urgent.”

Runci’s letter stated that any reform bill should include the following provisions:

- 1) Protect the environment, and require strong standards for protecting air and water quality, fish and wildlife habitat and the health of local communities;

- 2) Protect outdoor values and resources – allow for a consideration of mining as well as other potential uses of our public lands, including conservation;
- 3) Provide a fair return to taxpayers from federal mineral resources – and a return that is adequate to begin to address our national legacy of abandoned mines;
- 4) Respect the interest of communities, whether their economies depend on the protection of surrounding public lands, other economic uses or mineral development – and allow them to participate in decisions about their land and communities.

If the House of Representatives passes H.R. 2262, consideration of mining reform will move to the Senate, where further changes in the bill are expected. “Jewelers of America will continue to monitor mining reform legislation until we see the law changed,” says Runci.

For more information about Jewelers of America, visit www.jewelers.org.

Jewelers of America is the national trade association for retail jewelers. With 11,000 member stores, JA also works locally through its 40 state and regional affiliates. JA advocates high social, ethical, and environmental standards, promotes professional business and leadership skills, and enhances its members' profitability by offering education, certification, marketing and cost-saving programs.

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