



RICHLINE GROUP
A Berkshire Hathaway Company

Richline Statement on Dodd-Frank Conflict Minerals Law

January 09, 2017 12:46 PM Eastern Standard Time

NEW YORK--(BUSINESS WIRE)--As a leading member of the U.S. Jewelry industry, we are writing to express our support for Section 1502 of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act and the corresponding Securities and Exchange Commission's Conflict Minerals Rule. We do believe that the due diligence and traceability measures required by Section 1502 are an essential component to breaking the links between conflict and the minerals trade in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. This legislation has helped strengthen our own responsible supply chain management practices. The major jewelry industry association, The Responsible Jewellery Council, has modeled conflict minerals guidance from this precedent. We further acknowledge that this provision has led to the development of several important private sector schemes that promote and facilitate responsible sourcing from the region, including one that we are actively a participant.

Since the implementation of the regulation in 2013, we believe there has been much progress both on the ground in Congo and globally. The most recent study conducted by the International Peace Information Service (IPIS) found that 79% of tin, tantalum, and tungsten miners surveyed now work in conflict-free mines; 204 mines have been officially certified as conflict-free; 75% of smelters/refiners worldwide, for the four conflict minerals, have passed audits by the Conflict-Free Sourcing Initiative or associated programs.

At a minimum, Section 1502 has proven to be an important and effective first step in the effort to create a conflict-free mining industry in Congo that benefits legitimate business rather than extortion and violence. There is more work to be done to address remaining challenges including providing livelihood support to mining communities. As leaders in one of the industries which has been most acutely impacted by the Section 1502 reporting requirements, we believe solutions to these remaining challenges will only be developed through the implementation of additional complementary measures by public/private collaboration, not through weakening or repealing a process that has already been set in motion and is just beginning to affect meaningful change.

We, therefore, fully support the continued implementation of Section 1502. We have organized our efforts for full compliance because the cause is worthy of these efforts. We encourage our peers within the jewelry industry to uphold this responsible sourcing mandate and we will continue our work to promote transparent, efficient, and responsible mineral supply chains from the Great Lakes region of Africa.

About Richline Group, Inc.

Richline Group, Inc. is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Berkshire Hathaway Inc. Currently the major brands comprising Richline's portfolio are LeachGarner, Inverness, Rio Grande and Richline Brands. Berkshire Hathaway and its subsidiaries engage in diverse business activities including property and casualty insurance, utilities and energy, finance, manufacturing, retailing and services.

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