



INTERNATIONAL LONGSHORE & WAREHOUSE UNION

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LOCAL 142

April 23, 2021

The Honorable Ed Case, Congressman
U.S. Congress
House of Representatives

Dear Congressman Case,

As you know, the COVID-19 pandemic wreaked havoc on Hawaii's economy and led to record unemployment not seen since the Great Depression. Over 580,000 unemployment claims were filed in Hawaii in 2020, and today tens of thousands are still unemployed with many having to seek different jobs that they may not have the proper skills or training for.

And, while we are pleased to see the economy picking up and tourism numbers increasing substantially, the harsh reality is the economy is likely to look different today than from the pre-pandemic economy we were accustomed to. Some employers seem to be hiring fewer employees and as technology continues to advance fewer jobs may be available as employers look to automation to fill various positions.

As automation and technology continue to creep into our lives, education and job training become even more important to ensure our workforce can meet the needs of our ever evolving 21st century and technological advancements. Having a robust Workforce Development Council that provides job training and digital literacy training is key to advancing and educating our workforce for the jobs needed today and tomorrow.

Over the last year, we have had the pleasure to get to know Mr. Kaala Souza from the Workforce Development Council and have appreciated his input and his willingness and eagerness to train and educate many ILWU Local 142 members who have lost their jobs as a casualty of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many members have only worked the one job and for some they had been in that job for decades and did not need to learn additional skills. Mr. Souza has offered to train many of these members in digital literacy so they can compete in today's new technological world.

But Mr. Souza is only one individual and while he has the energy of 10 people it is clear the Workforce Development Council could utilize federal funding to help advance their efforts to train and educate Hawaii's workforce. The pandemic has made it more urgent than ever, and we hope you will support the federal funding they are seeking so Hawaii can move forward.

Sincerely,

Donna Domingo
President