

CONGRESSMAN  
**ED CASE**  
 Hawai'i • District 1



*Aloha!*

This quarter's edition of my Neighborhood Board Report reviews my first nine months back in Congress. This has been a very full period as your Congressman, and of course, our country continues through very difficult times. Staying in close touch with you and all those we serve together continues to be critical for me, and I extend my gratitude to the Board for welcoming my office into your meetings as part of my effort. I share with you in this report some issues that do not always grab the headlines. As one, I have joined like-minded colleagues in the U.S. House to unveil a comprehensive plan to restore fiscal responsibility to our federal budget. As another, I have created the first-ever Congressional Pacific Islands Caucus to focus our federal government on our 'ohana of some 24 island states, territories and nations that together call the Pacific our home.

I also update you on a measure I introduced in Congress that is drawing nationwide attention. This relates to the efforts of many communities across our country including our own to rein in growing illegal vacation rentals.

In addition to these quarterly Neighborhood Board newsletters, please continue to tune in to a regular program on 'Ōlelo for updates. My "Congressman Case Reports to Hawai'i" community broadcasting show has a regular primetime slot on 'Ōlelo ch.49 every third Sunday at 6 PM and again the following Tuesday at 10AM. There is a new show every month on what I'm up to and the issues I'm facing in DC and back home. Each show is also on my YouTube channel [Youtube.com/RepEdCase](https://www.youtube.com/RepEdCase)

Finally, please also visit my website at [case.house.gov](https://case.house.gov) and visit my social media

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## Social Media



@RepEdCase

 [Youtube.com/  
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accounts on Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube, which can be found on the top-right corner of my official website. Through these sites, I work to keep you up to date with what I've been doing.

## Taking on our increasing federal deficit

This sobering news was released in September: our nation's annual budget deficit has now surpassed \$1 trillion, and that happened in just eleven months. As the co-chair of a Task Force on Fiscal Responsibility and Government Reform, I have joined with a number of my House colleagues to call on both Democrats and Republicans to come together now to stop the fiscal bleeding and avoid further and accelerating damage to not only our fiscal stability, but also our national security.

As we address urgent issues, skyrocketing interest payments on the debt will limit our ability to make necessary investments going forward, It is unconscionable for us to continue to spend today the resources that future generations will need to address their own challenges tomorrow. I invite those interested in this issue to view the Blue Dog Blueprint for Fiscal Reform (<https://bit.ly/2GgZ9qC>), which includes bipartisan fixes Congress can make right now to start getting our fiscal house in order.

## Focusing on the Pacific

I have been convinced for some time that our country's and world's future lie in the region that encompasses the Pacific and Indian Oceans. This is the region that is the responsibility of our military, the Indo-Pacific Command, based in Camp Smith. This region has been too long overlooked, but includes many island nations whose maritime exclusive economic zones are not only part of our Pacific 'ohana, but encompass an area larger than the land areas of Russia and China combined.

We have long-standing partnerships and critical strategic and other interests throughout these Pacific Islands, not to mention that whole generations fought and won the Second World War and earlier conflicts here. Yet now they are increasingly under severe economic and environmental stress, and China is actively seeking to grow its influence on some of these island nations.

I helped to create this Pacific Islands Caucus along with other members of the House to demonstrate our nation's steadfast commitment to the Indo-Pacific region. As Congressman Don Young of Alaska, one of my Caucus co-chairs said, our Caucus' mission is to "work hard to increase the understanding of Congress on issues related to trade, economic development, and shared security in order to ensure the prosperity for all in the region."

## Protecting our communities from illegal vacation rentals

I want first to commend our state and city officials for taking on the problem of illegal short-term rentals that have proliferated in too many of our communities. Their growth has contributed directly not only to the disruption of whole neighborhoods that were never planned nor meant as hotel zones, but also to sky-high housing and rental prices, as well as the inability of too many of our local folks to buy or rent affordably.

These illegal rentals have been able to flourish because they have relied on marketing the homes on Internet platforms like HomeAway, VRBO, Flipkey, and the most popular platform, Airbnb. They have also claimed that a longtime federal law means they have no responsibility from making huge profits off listing rentals they know are illegal.

I have introduced a measure to confirm that the law they are using as a shield does not prevent them from being sued for participating in this illegal behavior at the expense of our communities. My Protecting Local Authority and Neighborhoods (PLAN) Act will confirm that these platforms can be held directly liable for violating state and local laws like what we have now enacted here.

## Updating increased regulation on the safety risks and community disruption of tour helicopters and other small aircraft

I wish to thank those Neighborhood Boards who have responded fully to your communities to deal with the safety risks and disruptions that tour helicopters and small aircraft pose to many of our neighborhoods around the island. A dozen Boards have now passed resolutions calling on government officials to deal with this problem before another tragedy occurs like the ones in Kailua and at Dillingham Air Field. There are other Boards that have taken this issue under consideration. And since I last reported to you about this issue, the Honolulu City Council passed its own resolution, and the problem has also taken on increased urgency on our Neighbor Islands including Hawai'i and Kaua'i.

I have also since introduced a measure into Congress that responds directly to your resolutions. My "Safe and Quiet Skies" Act will direct the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), which has virtually exclusive jurisdiction over such aircraft, to adopt tighter safety

recommendations long advanced by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB). Following the two tragedies on Oahu, which are not isolated instances nationally, the NTSB, which is responsible for investigating accidents but not for direct safety regulation, strongly suggested to the FAA that safety-related regulation of commercial tour helicopters and small aircraft skydiving operations is generally insufficient. Clearly, the FAA should now follow the NTSB's lead before any more lives are lost.

My Safe and Quiet Skies Act will further mandate strict regulation of commercial air tour operations to address defense risks and community disruption, including overflights of defense, national park, national cemetery, and other sensitive installations, as well as minimum altitude and maximum noise limits on all flights. Additionally, it will allow states, localities and tribes to impose stricter regulations on tour flights in their jurisdictions, to include time, route and frequency, with required public engagement.

## Answering your questions and serving your needs

In addition to these and many more activities, my staff and I are busy meeting with folks and groups throughout our district and in DC to better understand how we can help, plus reviewing and answering thousands of communications, assisting many constituents with your individual concerns ranging from immigration and Social Security, Medicare and veterans benefits, and hosting and arranging tours for visitors from home in our nation's capital. We very much look forward to hearing from you on anything we might be able to assist you with both here in our island home and in DC.

I truly appreciate the opportunity to update you on my activities as your Congressman and to serve you and our Hawaii in Congress.

*Mahalo nui loa,*

*Ed Case*