



KO'OLAUPOKO HAWAIIAN CIVIC CLUB

April 20, 2021

Congressman Ed Case
2210 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Aloha Congressman Case:

Coral reefs are culturally, ecologically, and economically important to communities in Hawaii. They are the foundation to our ancestral connection with the sea, and they support a multitude of other marine life, including the fish, molluscs, and crustaceans that nourish and sustain us. They also protect our shorelines by dissipating wave energy. But these coral reefs are in trouble, suffering from the impacts of global climate change as well as local stressors such as sedimentation, algal overgrowth, and pollution.

The Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club is the largest Hawaiian organization in the Kane'ohē Bay region and we have always identified one of our most important missions to be the protection of our land and water resources. The club is an involved site partner of the He'eia National Estuarine Research Reserve and provides consultation and referral services to numerous other public and private agencies and institutions. We consider the work of the Hawai'i Institute of Marine Biology to be vitally important to the future of our community and collaborate with them often.

As an island state, Hawai'i has relied too heavily on artificial shoreline structures such as seawalls, groins, and breakwaters to protect our coastal resources and properties. This protection comes at a high price, often destroying the very resources they were designed to protect, and inhibiting coral growth. The Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club endorses more eco-friendly solutions that will increase vital coral habitat in addition to protecting our beautiful shorelines.

The Hawai'i Institute of Marine Biology is a leading partner in the He'eia National Estuarine Research Reserve and an active and collaborative member of the community. HIMB also serves a critical role in conducting research aimed at protecting our marine environment and resources. The seawalls around Moku o Lo'e, the island home of HIMB, are badly in need of repair, which provides an excellent opportunity to explore new solutions for seawall restoration. We are very supportive of the efforts of HIMB to test new designs and materials on Moku o Lo'e so that alternatives to current seawall construction can be identified and implemented in other areas of Hawai'i.

Me Kealoha pumehana,

LEIALOHA KALUHIWA
President