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DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS

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April 20, 2021

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

Aloha e Congressman Case:

The Department of Hawaiian Home Lands is pleased to provide this letter of support for federal funding in recognition of the important work being done by Workforce Development Council (WDC) in the arena of digital literacy. The current pandemic revealed the alarming gap adult Americans face when forced to work from home or utilize telehealth as a primary means of communication. And a soaring unemployment rate means millions of Americans attempting to re-enter the work force that has grown increasingly digital. The Workforce Development Council utilizes hands-on and web-based training to elevate those with some technical skillset and to provide the technology basics for those with no prior experience.

Just this past week, Mr. Ka'ala Souza of Workforce Development Council spent a few days at our Waimānalo Kūpuna Housing to assist in the installation and setup of 31 refurbished computers from Hawaiian Hope. Mr. Souza's patience and ability to provide instruction to kūpuna ranging in age from 61 – 91 years old was a prime example of closing the digital literacy gap. We support WDC's efforts in their Workforce Resiliency Initiative to seek federal funding and applaud them for their hard work during this pandemic.

Aloha,

William J. Aila, Jr., Chairman
Hawaiian Homes Commission