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SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

March 3, 2021

The Honorable David Ige
Governor of Hawaii
Executive Chambers
State Capitol
Honolulu Hawaii 96813

RE: Kawaihāpai Airfield (Dillingham Airfield)

Dear Governor Ige

Thank you for your correspondence on February 12, 2021, acknowledging my letter on keeping Kawaihāpai Airfield open for civilian use. I had a highly productive and informative site visit with a number of stakeholders on February 17, 2021. Thus, I remain very optimistic and committed to finding a collaborative solution for the U.S. Army, State of Hawaii and the broader aviation community to keep Kawaihāpai Airfield open.

First, I want to thank you for allowing Director Jade Butay, Deputy Director Ross Higashi and Deputy Director Ed Sniffen to attend my site visit at Kawaihāpai Airfield. Their presence, along with representatives from the state and local government, including Lt. Governor Josh Green, Senator Gil Riviere, Senator Chris Lee, Representative Lauren Matsumoto, Councilmember Heidi Tsuneyoshi, U.S. Army Colonel Dan Misigoy and Colonel Jeffrey VanAntwerp, resulted in a productive conversation regarding the various governmental roles and longstanding concerns about the airfield.

Joining us in this critical conversation were many members of the general aviation and North Shore community to give their perspectives about the airfield, including pilots Jonah Pascual and Dr. Rich DeLeon, Mr. Tom Sanders and Mr. Ben Devine. Mr. Thomas Shirai, a lineal descendent of the Kawaihāpai lands where the airfield is located, was also able to provide us with the important historical and cultural perspective of the airfield.

I recognize that the Department of Transportation's current management of the water system at the airfield is unacceptable. There are various alternatives to manage the water system, some of which may include development of a private water system, management by the Board of Water Supply or it may be remedied by a non-profit cooperative organization. I understand that the status quo is not a long-term solution for both the airfield and the surrounding residents and

businesses that rely on the water system. I look forward to finding a solution with your office regarding the water system for our constituents.

I am willing to act as an intermediary to coordinate the necessary plans and actions needed to find common solutions that address the water system, long-term lease and safety compliance issues that if solved, can ensure Kawaihāpai Airfield can remain open. However, working with diverse stakeholders like the U.S. Army, local and state government officials and concerned constituents will take time. I request that you rescind the DOTA's notice to terminate the lease with the U.S. Army on June 30, 2021. As mentioned before, I am committing to work with these diverse stakeholders to ensure a reasonable solution for everyone.

Lastly, I would like to reference and attach the Federal Aviation Administration's letter from Mr. Mark A. McClardy to Mr. Ross Higashi, dated February 1, 2021, where the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) states, "[f]or the record, FAA does not currently support the most recent HDOT plan. ... As such, HDOT should not move forward with your proposed June 30, 2021 lease termination without FAA concurrence on a viable relocation plan for displaced tenants currently using HDH."

The FAA believes DOT should continue exploring and addressing the ongoing issues to resolve compliance issues. I stand ready and available to work with you and your Administration to do so.

If you have any questions, please contact my Legislative Director, Kana Smith, at Kana.Smith@mail.house.gov. Thank you.

Sincerely

Kaiali'i Kamele
Member of Congress

cc: Jade Butay, Director of Transportation
Ross Higashi, Deputy Director of Transportation

Attachment: Federal Aviation Administration Letter from Mark A. McClardy to Ross Higashi, dated February 1, 2021.