



U.S SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20416

October 28, 2014

The Honorable Tulsi Gabbard
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Gabbard:

Administrator Contreras-Sweet has asked me to respond to your recent inquiry regarding staffing at the U.S. Small Business Administration's (SBA) Hawaii District Office. I look forward to working with you and your office on the many small business issues regarding growing small businesses in Hawaii and across the country.

As you well know, small businesses significantly impact Hawaii's economy and are crucial to the health and well-being of your beautiful state. Small businesses in Hawaii represent 96.3% of all employers and employ over 53% of the private sector workforce. Hawaii small businesses numbered 118,121 and employed 256,569 in 2011.

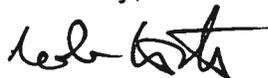
We understand the unique importance of the SBA's 8(a) Business Development (BD) Program to Hawaii, and in particular the Native-Hawaiian Organizations (NHO). The 8(a) BD Program is an essential instrument for helping socially and economically disadvantaged entrepreneurs gain access to the economic mainstream of American society. The 8(a) BD Program is also intended to foster regional or community economic development for firms owned by NHOs, Alaska Native Corporations (ANCs), and tribes.

We appreciate your concern about the need for additional staff in SBA's Hawaii District Office and we are working to address both immediate and long-term concerns. Deputy Associate Administrator Eugene Cornelius recently completed an onsite review of the Hawaii District Office in early September which engaged employees, management, and external stakeholders and recently conducted a similar review in the Alaska District Office in late October to help provide clarity in the issues faced by those offices and solutions to solving the concern. While staffing across the Agency is extremely tight, we understand the importance of having fully-staffed district offices and have made this a priority. Additionally, we are currently putting all of our BOSs through a rigorous training at the national level to help improve their knowledge and expertise in the Federal government contracting field.

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We appreciate your support of SBA and Hawaii's small business community. If you or your staff have any additional questions, please contact Mr. Daniel Krupnick, Deputy Assistant Administrator for Congressional and Legislative Affairs, at (202) 205-6700.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rob Hill", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Rob Hill
Associate Administrator
Office of Field Operations