COUNCILMEMBER CHRIS CATE

SIXTH DISTRICT

CITY OF SAN DIEGO

July 16, 2021

Mr. Mark Madrid
Associate Administrator
Office of Entrepreneurial Development
U.S. Small Business Administration
409 3rd St. SW
Washington, DC 20416

Dear Associate Administrator Madrid,

Please accept this letter of support for the Asian Business Association Foundation (ABAF) who is applying to be a "Spoke" for the U.S. Small Business Administration's Community Navigator Pilot Program, administered by the Office of Entrepreneurial Development. ABAF is partnering with the National Asian/Pacific Islander American Chamber of Commerce and Entrepreneurship (National ACE), who will serve as the "Hub" for this national, tier 1 program.

National ACE is the premier, national AAPI business organization representing over 2.2 million AAPI-owned businesses throughout the country. They have a demonstrated track record of working with AAPI and Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs) supporting capacity building efforts through diversity, equality and inclusion, economic empowerment, access to traditional and alternative forms of financing, and offering in-language technical assistance. National ACE was the only national AAPI organization to receive a CARES Act grant award from the Minority Business Development Agency in the U.S. Department of Commerce. With this grant, National ACE implemented a successful, 12-month technical assistance program, directly assisting over 16,000 small businesses and conducting over 150 webinars, trainings, and workshops and helping AAPI business owners keep their doors open and operate safely.

With the SBA Community Navigator Program's Hub & Spoke model, National ACE will act as the fiscal and coordinating agent for this project (the "Hub"), and is partnering with 25 trusted, culturally and technically knowledgeable partners ("Spokes") across the country to provide a unique collaborative approach to delivering long-term economic small business recovery and resiliency.

Under the Community Navigator approach, this remarkable team will be able to provide much needed resources to the small business community by conducting targeted outreach to specific sectors of the entrepreneurial community. Their in-language assistance will ensure that our nation's most vulnerable small businesses receive the support they need to access federal relief programs that can help them weather the economic downturn caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Recovery services will include financial assistance, access to

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capital, contracting and procurement assistance, marketing, operations, business development, export and industry specific training, and other areas of technical assistance to aid businesses in stabilization and expansion.

Asian Business Association Foundation (ABAF), a 501(C)(3), was established in 2001. The ABAF believes in building sustainable communities through inclusive economic development and a qualified diverse workforce. The ABAF provides business development and capacity building services for minority business enterprises (MBE) in San Diego and Orange Counties through educational workshops, business mentorship, advocacy, access to capital and their Technical Assistance Services (TAS) Program. Amidst the current pandemic and economic crisis, ABAF's TAS Program has provided on-going counseling and support to any business at no cost, assisting hundreds of minority entrepreneurs and small business owners with their immediate and long-term needs- including applying for financial assistance to ensuring they have access to the resources they and their employees need.

The goal of their grant proposal is to strengthen the accessibility of resources and provide expert business consulting to economically disadvantaged AAPI and minority business owners as part of a broader outreach strategy. If given this opportunity, this impressive team can make real long-term progress and a lasting, positive impact for AAPI- and minority-owned businesses throughout the country.

We hope that you will give the proposal by National ACE and the Asian Business Association Foundation every consideration. We are confident this grant is necessary to help our AAPI and minority business communities stay resilient and strong for years to come.

Sincerely,

Chris Cate
Councilmember – Sixth District
City of San Diego

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